Introibo

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February 6, 1903.

INTROIBO

A SERIES OF DETACHED READINGS
ON THE ENTRANCE VERSICLES
OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL YEAR

BY

THE REV. CORNELIUS CLIFFORD

Chaplain to the Religious of the Sacred Heart at Elmhurst

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Printed, March, 1903

The Trow Press, New York

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I INSCRIBE THIS BOOK
TO MY MANY FRIENDS IN
THE SOCIETY OF JESUS

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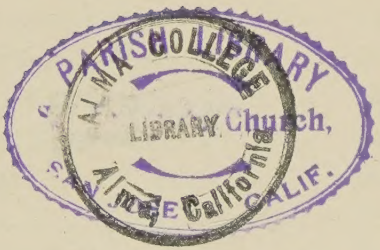

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Introduction.

IN the following meditations, which are now submitted to a more general public than that to which they first made appeal, the author has endeavored to direct attention to the Sunday *Introits* of the ecclesiastical year. These expressions of the Church's inner mind will be found, we believe, to be worth our study, when it is observed that in them, more persuasively than in any other portion of her liturgy, she reveals the attitude of soul, sweetly grave, or sad, or exultant, in which she would have us keep each separate commemoration or festival of her ordering. Made up for the most part of scattered verses from the psalms, or detached fragments from the prophets, these preludings of her sacrificial office embody in rememberable form the special burden of the day's teaching. "Day unto day pours its fountain of speech, night unto night showeth forth knowledge." She is never without her message, for she has the key to all her Master's imparted lore. To make the central Fact of His Mass more clear and shining, to save our sense of it from being dulled by wont or use, she brings forth each morning out of her goodly Treasure House of Tradition and Scripture "things new and old," and bids us listen and fashion out of them

a "melody of the heart." What the parode, or first marching song, was to an old Greek tragedy, that is the *Introit* to the more awful drama enacted to the eye of faith each time a Mass is celebrated. It is the key to all that follows; it gives a definite lyrical clew to the Mystery that lies behind. It has always seemed to us a great pity that the faithful should resort to tasteless, or even to unsound books of devotion, when all the materials for a discreet and profitable attention to the *Action* of the great Mystery lie at hand in the Missal itself. For there are intelligent and fervent Catholics of whom it may be said that they do not treat the Sunday Sacrifice as they should. They are not deaf to the essential message of the great rite, it is true. That still stands to them for what it is—the one immovable and resplendent Fact round which their religious existence as children of the Church must swing in ever-narrowing circles. But if they have not missed the central Thing, they are culpably insensible to the significance of much that leads up to it. They have no feeling for its ceremonies, for its music, for its incomparable words. The poetry in which the Mystery is enwrapped wakes no response in them. They seem to have no inner ear. The broad divisions of the sacred action have been explained to them from their youth up; but when they come to hear Mass they pay no heed to them. Translations of the Missal abound—some of them not without beauty and appositeness—but they never learn the use of them. They show a preference for forms of prayer instead

that have no direct bearing on the solemn business in hand. Is this right? We are exhorted by an Apostle, who was himself a lover of the Blessed Sacrament, and who has warned Christians for all time against the danger of mishandling it, to cultivate, so far as we are able, a habit of sympathy with Our Lord. We are to think His thoughts, acquire His bent of mind. How can we hope to do that, if we persistently ignore the consecrated speech of His authentic interpreter in the one ceremony by which she renews His bodily presence in the world? St. Ignatius of Loyola puts it down as the note of an orthodox spirit to love all the liturgical prayers of the Roman Church, the office and singing of the Mass, the psalmody of the canonical hours, and the rest. Is it not strange that since the Book of the Exercises was written there has been a tendency, growing more and more marked as the times move on, to forget the very things which the man who stayed the Reformation would like us all to remember? Without stopping to enquire into the causes of such neglect, it is sad enough to be obliged to admit that throughout English-speaking Christendom, to mention no other, there is a noticeable tendency on the part of the laity to ignore the separate details of the Eucharistic office, the Introits, the Collects, the Psalm versicles, sometimes even the very Canon itself. The spiritual consequences of this dulness are graver than many of us imagine. It is the Mass, after all, that gives meaning to our corporate life as Catholics; it is the Mass, too, that is intended in the economy of

the New Law to keep the heart of the individual believer fresh and strong in the discipline of an interior life. Surely the very sentences and half phrases of so mysterious an institution ought to be precious to us for their own sakes, even if they had not been taken bodily, as they have been, from the most moving passages of both Testaments, and acquired in consequence a new and mystical meaning for the reflective worshipper. *These are the words that should act as goads to our minds, the remembrance of which should be as unshaken as nails well fastened. Were they not taught to our fathers in the faith by the masters of their assemblies in the beginning? Have not Apostles and saintly bishops rehearsed them from of old? Were they not given by our Shepherd, even by the Christ Who is become our Bread?*

Even the archæology of so large a subject ought not to be without its interest for the faithful worshipper. If we except the single ceremony of Baptism, the Mass in its Roman form is probably, in substance, at least, the oldest religious rite that Christendom has to show. In its more central aspect there has never been, and Catholics are disposed to believe there could hardly well be, room for serious change. A sacramental form of words in a creed like ours will not bear logical alteration. It was the instinctive sense of that fact, no doubt, which long ago helped to crystallize much that is now irremovably imbedded in the Canon. East and West alike, from a very early period, were consistently mistrustful of innovation. But if, on the one

side, the nucleus of the great function could not be modified, on the other, the passion for variety, which exists even in religious human nature, slowly won its way. Prayers and usages from "mother churches" were adopted. The antiphonal singing, which seems to have been practised from the outset, came to vary with the varying divisions of the year. Lent and Easter and Pentecost had their characteristic notes. It was in all likelihood out of seasonable differences of this sort that the custom arose of adapting a particular psalm or other portion of Scripture to serve by way of *Entrance Chant*. In what circumstances these adaptations found their way into the several liturgies of the West it would be impossible to say. The matter is involved in no little obscurity, and those who have tried to follow the Abbé Duchesne's researches on the subject will not be inclined arbitrarily to fix a date. As a piece of preparatory psalm-singing intended to engage the devout thoughts of the faithful, while the bishop and his ministers got ready for the Holy Sacrifice, the *Introit* may possibly reach back into sub-Apostolic times. Justin Martyr's account of the Eucharistic celebration lends color to that view; and there are those who pretend to see in Pliny's reference to the hymn sung by the Bithynian converts a further evidence of its great antiquity. Considerations of that sort, it must be admitted, however, are not convincing; nor are they needed to bring home to the minds of intelligent Catholics the wonderful suggestiveness of these opening versicles of an office which is at

least fifteen centuries old.* Of the custom that eventually made it obligatory on the celebrant to recite them, this is not the place to speak. It is the significantly inerrant instinct, rather, which picked them from their setting in the old Italic version of Scripture, and gave them a seasonable, or sometimes even a Eucharistic bias, that concerns us in the present work. It was the thought of their remarkable appositeness † in this respect that first suggested the idea of translating the entire Roman series into English and selecting a few of its more striking phrases as themes for informal meditation.

A single word will suffice on the use which may be made of the present volume.

It is not intended that the book should be used at Mass; it should be read, say, for a few minutes the evening before, or, if that is not possible, it might be studied slowly while the congregation are waiting for the priest to enter the sanctuary. The method employed in the development of many of the Scripture phrases

* A vaguely authenticated tradition, based upon the *Liber Pontificalis*, ascribes the formal introduction of the *Introits* to Pope Celestine in the early part of the fifth century (423); and Pope Gregory is said later to have re-arranged those already in use in his day, and even to have compiled others, probably of a more definite character, for the greater commemorations of the year.

† Writers of the remoter Middle Age saw in the *Introit* an expression of the yearnings of the Patriarchs of the Old Testament for the coming of Our Lord. An earlier reference describes them in simpler terms, as prayers to draw down the Spirit of Grace and Supplication—*Spiritus gratiæ et precum*—Zach. xii, 10. The Abbé Duchesne, speaking of the Gallican liturgy, seems to be of the opinion that they grew out of the mere desire to add pomp and solemnity to the celebration of the Mysteries. Cf. *Origines du Culte Chrétien*, c. vii, § 1.

hardly differs appreciably from the suggestions thrown out by St. Ignatius in his rules or hints for the *Second Manner of Prayer*. The author has had no wish to substitute his own thoughts for those of the liturgy. His aim has been, as far as possible, to point out what infinite riches lie in the little space of a single versicle, if one will only stop to ponder it. A mere reading of the text of the *Introit* itself will often suffice to discover its secret. With that as a clew, it surely ought to be an easy matter for a fervent heart to follow understandingly the Mass of the day.

Feast of SS. Cornelius and Cyprian MM.,
Convent of the Sacred Heart,
Elmhurst, Providence, R. I.,
MCMII

INTROIBO

The First Sunday in Advent

INTROIT: Ps. xxiv, 1-5.
EPISTLE: Rom. xiii, 11-14.
GOSPEL: S. Luke xxi, 25-33.

Introitus: Ad te levavi animam meam: Deus meus, in te confido, non erubescam: neque irrideant me inimici mei: etenim universi, qui te expectant, non confundentur.

Vias tuas, Domine, demonstra mihi; et semitas tuas edoce me.

The Entrance Versicle: *Unto Thee have I lifted up my soul: O my God, in Thee have I put my trust: Let me not be confounded: Neither let mine enemies laugh me to scorn: For all they that wait upon Thee shall not be ashamed.*

Make me to know Thy ways, O Lord, and teach me Thy paths.

UNTO Thee have I lifted up my soul: We ended the ecclesiastical year on Sunday last with thoughts of the peace that comes of the life-long habit of thanksgiving. The desolation of the day of wrath, set before

us by Our Lord in the Gospel would not make us afraid, because we had been assiduous in providing against it in the daily renewed joy of the Mass. We begin this Advent season in a kindred spirit. Once more the dreadful reminder of judgment to come is brought prominently forward, and we are braced and stayed in hope by this ordinance in which *we have put our trust.* We shall not fear, because *we have lifted up our souls,* and laid them on the altar with our *Sacrifice.* This is the way to fulfil the Apostolic injunction *to walk decently, as in the day. We cast away the works of darkness and clothe ourselves with the armor of light, when we put on the Lord Jesus.* We must never forget that to participate to the full in the riches of the Mass we must communicate. That was the ancient idea. *We must put on the Lord Jesus. Then will our souls be lifted up as high as His, because we shall have become like Him, even here on earth, before His Second Advent is announced by His sign in the heavens.*

Unto Thee have I lifted up my soul: We give our hearts to God in penance. We lift them up, we carry them, as the Hebrew text implies. The Advent season is a time of abstinence, and soul-searching. *Now is the time for us to rise from sleep.* No repentance is possible without a change of heart. Whatever life we live, natural or supernatural, angelical or merely bestial, has its roots there. *Out of the heart cometh forth life!* If we are to alter that more real part of ourselves, we

must seek out the agent of change that can penetrate and resolve it; we must find the force that will break up and recombine its most elusive constituent atoms. We have that Refashioner in all the sacraments, indeed, but we never come so close to It as in the Communion of the Mass. The Transubstantiation that takes place there during the consecration of the elements, wonderful and real as we know it to be, is only the divine Type and Analogue of another Transubstantiation, hardly less wonderful, even if it is less complete, merely because we are creatures and still free. *I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me.* I have become other than I was, because *I have lifted up my soul: I have changed my heart, I have carried it* to the Great Changer, to the *Jehovah Who maketh all things new,* when I receive Him as Sacramental Food at the Holy Table. We not only think and act differently after a good Confession and Communion, we love differently. The will is changed; the whole inner being of a man is divinized and transformed.

O my God, in Thee have I put my trust: Whether men dwell longest with memory or with hope is a question that will depend largely upon temperament; but if one will escape from a sordid present there can be little doubt as to where the saner form of life lies. Hope goes with health, with soundness of heart, always. How hopeful the young are! Their hopes are the measure of their strength. And in religion the same law holds.

The heart that sincerely puts its trust in God is sure to overcome the world. *The holy ones that put their trust in Jehovah will win strength; they will take wings to themselves like the eagle; they will fly, and fail not.*

O my God, in Thee have I put my trust: We often speak of man as a microcosm, and of the heart of man as containing the whole world's wealth in its narrow room. It is by the hopes that spring there, as long as life lasts, that we gauge the height and might and depth, the amplitudes and arcs and distances, of that withdrawn universe. By what he leans upon is a man's hidden quality revealed. If, then, we put our trust in God, in God as He is made known to us in the Breaking of Bread, how wonderful will our spiritual existence be, as we make our way back to Jerusalem! How wide and clear our horizon will become, how vast in compass, how replete with mystery and light, with law and secret majesty! The pagans did well to imagine some wild titanic ambition behind the rapt faces and calm brows of the early Christian believers. They were not so far wrong when they insisted that those mysterious crepuscular rites revealed another world built fanatically upon hopes that the political philosopher could not appraise. Is not the same thing true of good Catholics as a class to-day? They are tolerated because they are thought to be understood. Their political history is there for the world to read and comment on. They are known now and endured. But in the measure in which the

hopes of their creed set them apart from their fellows, they are a puzzle and a mystery, like their own Mass, begetting a sort of ill-disguised fear, lest, perhaps, the yoke of God be thrust into their hands

> To execute vengeance on the nations,—
> Punishment on the peoples;
>
> To bind their Kings with chains:
> And their nobles with fetters of iron:
>
> To execute on them the judgment written:
> The glory is He of all His pious ones!

The glory of all His pious ones—the Hope of all His Beloved! That is the sense of it! It is their great trust in the power of the Mass—their hope in Jehovah—that separates the children of the old faith from those whose trust is narrowed to an inert page which they only half understand.

Make me to know Thy ways, O Lord, and teach me Thy paths: God has told us by the mouths of prophets how far removed His ways are from ours. They are the full height of heaven above us; yet they are no longer past finding out. Has He not revealed them in the Mass? The Mass brings us to Christ, gives us Christ, sets Him down in the midst of us. In His ways we are made to know the Father's. For us who have learned Christ as Catholics a wise use of the Sacraments is the first step towards learning those higher ways, which are said to be righteousness, and those more secret paths, which the Psalmist calls peace.

The Second Sunday in Advent

INTROIT: Is. xxx, 30; Ps. lxxix, 1-2.
EPISTLE: Rom. xv, 4-13.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. xi, 2-10.

Introitus: Populus Sion: ecce Dominus veniet ad salvandas gentes: et auditam faciet Dominus gloriam vocis suæ in lætitia cordis vestri.

Qui regis Israel, intende: qui deducis velut ovem Joseph.

The Entrance Versicle: *A people for Sion: Behold the Lord shall come to save the nations: Yea, the Lord shall cause His glorious voice to be heard in the gladness of your heart.*

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel: Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock.

A PEOPLE for Sion: The opening words of the Entrance Prayer will bear that sense. *Populus Sion!* Sion shall be peopled; the nations shall enter in; the Church shall win the allegiance of those that stand afar off. Heresy, which marks its progress by an apparent frustration of that hope, invariably

ends by contributing to its realization. How victorious and wide-spread Arianism was in its day! Yet the nations that were duped by it returned. East and West, they entered in. Sion was peopled once more.

A little more than three centuries ago the fairest and most prolific provinces of the faith were devastated. The north countries, that had deserved so well of the Church for the saints and doctors they had given her, and for the wealth of sacred literature with which they had endowed her schools, drove her forth from their borders and listened to her message no more. The songs of Sion became as the songs of a strange people in their ears. That defection was, perhaps, her severest trial. Some have attempted to show that the bitterness of it was more than assuaged by the unexpected triumph that met her newly awakened missionary enterprise in the Far East and in the forests of the recently discovered lands to the West. Souls are souls; and human hearts are always game for the divine Hunter that never ceases to track them. In His kingdom it is not the color of the skin that counts; nor is it native fibre of character that tells most in building up the type of which His Son first furnished the divine Exemplar. We cannot insist too much on that. But when we have made every concession, shall we not be forced to confess that the loss of the Teutonic races to the Church was a calamity without parallel in her history? See what they have done for the improvement of mankind. It would be hard to name a distinct triumph in progres-

sive politics which cannot be ascribed to their sturdy sense of natural right, and for which hundreds of their sons have not cheerfully sacrificed all that this world holds dear. In letters, too, and in the higher achievements of the spirit, what a history is theirs! *Here, surely, is a people for Sion*, and how the saints of the past three centuries have longed for their redemption! Teresa of Jesus, Philip Neri, M. Olier—each, rising above the petty barriers of race prejudice, thought only of what the Church had lost in that vast apostasy, and prayed that *Jehovah might come to save the peoples that had wandered into the dark*. Ignatius of Loyola was so haunted by this idea of a common return, that he ordered his sons to pray unceasingly for the conversion of the Northern Nations. At the beginning of each month solemn religious exercises and Masses of entreaty are still enjoined in the houses and colleges of his Order to bring about this long-deferred change of heart. Is our age to behold the accomplishment of all these dreams of the saints? Are we, in return for all the Masses that have been offered up during these past three centuries, *to behold a people dwelling in Sion at Jerusalem?* Shall we have *a new song, as in the night, when a holy solemnity is kept, and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the Mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel?* Ask Our Lord to-day, when He comes down upon His Altar, to bring this thing to pass. Let the conversion of the "Tribes of the North" be the sign of His secret Advent

among us. Beseech Him *to cause His glorious Voice to be heard.* The Apostle of the Gentiles has reminded us that the Blessed Eucharist contains the Bread by which we are all made one. Sermons are good, books are good, the force of example is good; but the Mass—oh, there is no engine of conversion like that, if priest and people only pray together with one heart! *Stir up our hearts, O Lord, that we may make ready the ways of Thine Only Begotten!*

The Lord shall cause His glorious Voice to be heard: Christ is the Voice of the Father; He is the Word from the beginning; and through Him alone have we access to Godhead. No man cometh to the Father but through the Son; nor does any man find the Son, but through His Church, which is wider than her visible borders; just as the divinity of Christ is infinitely wider and deeper than the manhood to which so many are unconsciously drawn. *We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* The Church's ordinances are the instruments of that change. We shall never really *learn Christ* save through her. That is what St. Augustine means by saying that one must be familiar with the history of the Church before he can hope to understand the human character of Our Lord. As He is the *Voice of the Father, so is she the Voice of Christ; He that heareth you heareth Me!* He is one with her; for

she is His mystical Body. We constitute the Same, member for member.

In the gladness of your heart! It is in the secret joy of union with the Church's gifts, and especially with the gift of the Blessed Eucharist, that the soul learns the deeper mysteries of Christ. *His Voice of glory is heard in the gladness of the Heart.* Is there not a note of it always in the versicle appointed to be read by the priest and sung by the choir after the Communion of the Mass is over? *Arise, Jerusalem,* we say to-day, *arise and stand upon thy high place and behold the gladness that comes to thee from thy God!* There is no place higher than the Catholic altar, nor is there any gladness on earth comparable to that which constitutes the Father's substantial, and yet perfectly human, joy. *This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him.* We hear Him in the Mass; we come miraculously close to Him sacramentally. Then, indeed, does virtue go out of Him. *The glory of His Voice is heard in the gladness of the Heart!*

The Third Sunday in Advent

INTROIT: Phil. iv, 4-6.
EPISTLE: Phil. iv, 4-7.
GOSPEL: S. John i, 19-28.

Introitus: Gaudete in Domino semper: iterum dico gaudete. Modestia vestra nota sit omnibus hominibus: Dominus enim prope est. Nihil solliciti sitis: sed in omni oratione petitiones vestræ innotescant apud Deum.

Benedixisti, Domine, terram tuam: avertisti captivitatem Jacob.

The Entrance Versicle: *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice: Let your moderation be known to all men; for the Lord is nigh: Be nothing solicitous; but in all your praying let your petitions be made known in the sight of God.*

Thou hast blessed Thy land, O Lord: Thou hast made an end of the captivity of Jacob.

REJOICE in the Lord always: The sobriety of a Christian life is haloed with a complement of gladness. It sows in tears, it reaps in joy, and comes into its own at last, bearing its sheaves of plenty. Austerity is not a permanent note of true religion. The temper that

begets it is really sweet in its inner aspect, and only appears to be hard, because the stranger who observes it in the gates is somewhat blind to the infinite variety of the heart that makes it all beautiful within. The soul that waits will not be deprived of good things forever. It will be grave for a while, calm and self-contained; but its joy will come quickly in the morning. The faithful remnant of Israel know Whom they have trusted. The Jehovah of their strenuous days, of their wanderings and captivity, is not the full God of the Newer Dispensation Whom their own Anointed Servant is to declare by a life of uncompromising paradoxes. Out of the grandeur and the thunder of His theophanies is to come the Sweetness which they shall know one day as Christ. They see His day and are glad, even while the dust and weariness of the desert make their faces pale with human grief. They gird their loins and quit them like men, waiting resolutely for His advent. They rejoice in the fuller Jehovah, the more Human God, always.

And what Israel's time of waiting was to the remnant who suffered and hoped, that is our time of waiting unto us, who have inherited the promises. The Incarnation is so tremendous a mystery that we can never be too assiduous in preparing worthily to celebrate the most baffling of its evidences. The thought of God in the guise of babyhood may well give the philosopher pause. Truth has no greater paradox to offer out of

all its new-old treasures than that. To learn even the least of its startling lessons one needs a longer season of discipleship than a mere four weeks of Advent fasting and self-searching, ending in a Midnight Mass of joy. All through life must the true believer temper austerity with gladness. God the righteous Judge dwells corporeally in the Christ Whose earlier coming we celebrate each year with sacred rites and symbols, with psalms and hymns, that even a child may understand. That idea is not dwelt upon sufficiently by those who feel inspired to preach only a Gospel of Terror. Fear, no doubt, enters into all religion; but the religion in which it is allowed to preponderate is essentially incomplete; it is at best a religion for prophets and for a people sitting in darkness, but it has no right to the unreserved allegiance of those who have themselves become children in guile for the sake of the Child Who became the world's unfailing Joy. Hebraism, Pharisaism, over-carefulness, may do for those who have learned Christ only in part; but Catholicism, which is as genuinely human as Christ Himself is human, is the religion for all those who know that the springs of mirth and holy laughter lie deeper than the sources of the world's tears.

Let your moderation be known to all men: Our Lord was no ascetic; His great Apostle Paul, who has best interpreted His spirit to the western world, was no ascetic, though he chastised his body and brought it into servitude to the reasonableness of the New Law. Asceticism serves a purpose in the Church, and may be said, without

exaggeration, to have been baptized by her spirit; yet of itself it is no essential part of the soul of genuine religion, and does not necessarily reveal the lineaments of the truer Christ, Who in His earthly career was at once manly and tender above all His saints' imaginings of Him, and Who had moreover a curiously every-day note about His exterior conduct that rebuked the intolerant austerity of the Pharisees and formalists of the towns, as well as the aloofness of the dwellers in the desert. And yet asceticism has played a large part in the history of the Church, and has, if possible, a graver rôle to fulfil in an age which threatens to be emasculately enamoured of the material comforts of existence. But its functions will ever be remedial and transitional. Certain types of temperament will be saved by it, as long as the Gospel will be preached. Through its ordered relentlessness they will hew and shape their aboriginal grotesqueness of nature into conformity with their ideal of Our Lord, and achieve, it may be, an heroic measure of sanctity in the effort. *Omnis Spiritus laudet Dominum!* There is room for every spirit in the spacious kingdom of the Church; but the type of character that best reveals her force to the world is the one commended by St. Paul in his versicle of the Epistle to the Philippians which has been selected as the theme of to-day's Entrance Versicle. Balance and moderation, an equable sphericity of mind and soul, those are the notes of the man who has grasped the central secret of Our Lord's ideal of self-discipline for the kingdom of

Heaven's sake. That is the burden of that wonderful little book, which has done more to modify the moral forces of latter-day Catholicism than any other engine of safety devised by the saints for the service of their Mother the Church. What St. Ignatius tells us with such homely Spanish common sense in more than one passage of the Book of the Exercises is but a sixteenth century rendering of this exhortation of to-day's Introit. His vindication of the supreme excellence of the "common life" as distinguished from a merely penitential and, perhaps, apparently selfish monasticism, on the one hand, and a too dangerous devotion to ecclesiastico-secular pursuits on the other, is but a great saint's rendering of the lesson that Our Lord's human career enforces from whatever side we approach it. To be sober and steadfast, to watch and pray, and yet to be so Christ-centred all the while that our fellows shall know us for men of moderation in all things, that is the reasonable service a good Catholic is called upon to pay to God.

For the Lord is nigh: However remote the General Judgment may be, the Lord is none the less nigh in this sense that He will come quickly and at the hour of death. We shall see Him face to face.

In the light of His countenance the dark places of the soul will be illuminated. If we habitually think of death as something far off, then, without doubt, Christ is far off, and the lessons of Advent are lost upon us. To personify death is no empty effort of the imagination.

Every true Catholic is a poet when the fear of that inevitable hour rises before him. Not the gruesome abstraction fabled of old, but the living Presence of a Man in Whom he has believed, the Face which is to be either his delight or his eternal terror, the Hands which his hands are to clutch at in the abyss—that is how his thought runs at mention of that disquieting word. *Death is Christ, and He is always nigh!* When Our Blessed Lord was about to withdraw from His Apostles the comfort of His bodily presence, He left this precept of remembrance as a legacy behind Him. He, the Son of Man, appointed by His Father to be Judge of the entire race, of its dubious achievements, as well as of its pathetic ideals, asked them to think of Him always as mysteriously present; and He sealed the injunction by instituting the Mass. Out of that ordinance of His love was to come the strength that would enable the soul to bear up against His second coming. *He is always nigh.* He is with us in conscience; He is with us in the Sacraments; He is with us corporeally in the Eucharist; He is with us when we pray and suffer. He never leaves us. We are members of His mystical Body, and by His Spirit are we all vivified. He is nigh at hand, too, in the sense that a due preparation for a great feast like Christmas brings us closer to His Heart.

The Fourth Sunday in Advent

INTROIT: Is. xlv, 8, and Ps. xviii, 2.
EPISTLE: 1 Cor. iv, 1-5.
GOSPEL: S. Luke iii, 1-6.

Introitus: Rorate coeli desuper, et nubes pluant Justum: aperiatur terra, et germinet Salvatorem.

Coeli enarrant gloriam Dei: et opera manuum ejus annuntiat firmamentum.

The Entrance Versicle: *Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down the Just One: Let the earth open and bring forth the Saviour.*

The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork.

DROP down dew, ye heavens, from above: There is a striking contrast between the parables appropriated in Scripture to Our Lord's human coming and those that symbolize every other phase of the divine Presence. The great Mystery of the New Testament was to be revealed gradually, and, as it were, in secret. The kingdom of heaven was not to be heralded *with observation.* It was to be like the dew-fall, something felt, but not seen. What a small fraction of the ancient world looked upon

the Face that Israel had yearned for; and yet in a little while the masses of civilized mankind began to be conscious of a change. He came down, as He had promised, *like rain upon the mown grass.*

Our Lord's way of dealing with the individual soul does not seem to be radically different from the law of His mercies toward the general heart of the world. He loves our human wills too well to do them violence. He performs His most stupendous changes in secret. The conscience is often quickened long before tears begin to flow. A true psychology of repentance lies in this idea. Unless He anticipates and blesses us with the dew-fall of His grace, how shall we have

> Wisdom to understand
> The worth of all that we have lost?

Who can say where Mary Magdalen's conversion began? Was it in the house of Simon the Leper? It was a mere look that stirred the heart of Peter. *Drop down dew, ye Heavens, from above!* That is a prayer seasonable at all times of the ecclesiastical year, and most appropriate when the Host is lifted up for our adoration in the Mass.

And let the skies rain down the Just One: His justice, His righteousness, came to Him by nature. Ours comes to us by grace. Both righteousnesses are from above. *Nubes pluant Justum.* We could never acquire goodness of ourselves. Some speak optimistically of human

nature; others again speak contemptuously of it, as of a thing never to be counted on. The truth is it deserves both judgments. It is both king-like and base; but between its highest reaches after perfection and the righteousness it acquires by co-operating in the work of its own salvation in Christ, there is a great chasm fixed. The Just One has passed across it, *faciens utraque unum!* Even before we are wholly changed, whether in Baptism or Penance, we feel Him

> As the buried grain
> May feel the rustle of the unfallen rain.

No happier symbol of the secret law of His daily and unremitting descents upon poor struggling human hearts, guilty, but not wholly hardened in guilt, was ever written in obedience to His Spirit by psalmist or prophet than this: *The Skies rain down the Just One!*

Let the earth open and bring forth the Saviour: What we have said above is not an entire account of the matter. If the heavens have bowed down and given us *Jesus Christ, the Just,* the earth has had its share in that Mystery too. If He is God, He is not the less perfect man, being Mary's Son, born miraculously of her virginal womb according to the flesh, in which, and through which alone, we have known Him. *Utraque unum!* It is the great glory of the Church to have vindicated the truth of the Incarnation, not only against the heresiarchs who directly impugned it of old, but against the professors of an incomplete Christianity, who, while arrogating to

themselves a more intimate and personal knowledge of His divine character, have managed somehow to ignore that fundamental fact, without which His character, for all its winning charm, would lose its most potent meaning. *The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.* The simplest and most unlettered child of the Church is never allowed to forget that. Thrice every day he kneels devoutly in adoration, as the memory of it is recalled by the Angelus Bell. *The earth opened!* Mary had part in that unfolding of the divine purposes. Through her is He rightly styled, being so in His human nature, *Rod of the Root of Jesse!* One mystery is but the threshold of another in the kingdom of God. *Deep calleth unto deep!* As the earth opened in Mary's inviolate maidenhood and gave us the Root of Salvation, so in the sacred ordinance of the Mass does it open hourly, in zones of divine exuberance extending every-whither round the globe, and bring closer to us than ever before that Herb of Healing, which *springs up like a plant out of a thirsty soil.* Oh, if God is wonderful in Mary—and how marvellous He is in her, the flawless crown of all motherhood, let the *Magnificat* proclaim!—He is still more wonderful in His Mass. For if Mary is the Gate of Heaven and Earth's Mystical Rose, the Mass is surely Heaven itself let down to earth, and the Presence it reveals to faith is not less holy than that Central Core of Deity round which the petals of the Rose of Beatitude circle, row upon row of glorified souls, as the transfigured genius of the great Florentine singer saw them in the Vision which men can

never forget. Could we but pierce through the veils of that thing which we call material accident, should we not behold all saints and angels clustered about the *Just One* of the consecrated Host?

In forma dunque di candida Rosa!

The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork: Not the firmament of heaven only, but the earth itself has given new glory to God since the first Mass was said so many centuries ago. He has declared that He will not give His glory to another; and yet He gives it to His Son; and lo! His Son hides the light of it beneath the bushel of our suffering nature; and as though that were not enough, nature and Godhead alike are hidden until the end of the world under the appearances of Bread and Wine. This, too, is *His Handiwork*, and it is more wonderful than the firmament of suns and stars!

The Sunday within the Octave of Christmas

INTROIT: Wis. xviii, 14-15, and Ps. xcii, 1.
EPISTLE: Gal. iv, 1-7.
GOSPEL: S. Luke ii, 33-40.

Introitus: Dum medium silentium tenerent omnia, et nox in suo cursu medium iter haberet, omnipotens Sermo Tuus, Domine, de coelis a regalibus sedibus venit.

Dominus regnavit, decorem indutus est: indutus est Dominus fortitudinem, et præcinxit se.

The Entrance Versicle: *While the silence lay like a flood upon the face of all things, and the night in its passage marked its own high noon, the Word of Thine omnipotence came from His throne of majesty in heaven.*

The Lord hath begun to reign, He hath robed Him with beauty: The Lord hath robed Him with mightiness; yea, He hath girt Him therewith.

WHILE the silence lay like a flood: The figure that the inspired writer of the Wisdom of Solomon applies to the darkness that preceded Israel's deliverance, the Church by a still more tropical use, adapts to her own poetic purposes to-day. Jehovah came when the grief of

His own was sorest. His Word pleads most over-masteringly when the silence that begets the need of Him can be felt. We are accustomed to speak of paganism as though it were too much occupied with its extraordinary lusts to be finely sensible of Our Lord's coming. That view, however, is only partially true. If the extra-Israelitic world sinned in ways that baffle the ingenuity of our latter-day iniquity to comprehend, it busied itself, too, with thoughts and imaginations about a Redeemer. It reached out vaguely for Him in the dark; *it sought Him, if haply He might be found.* The idea that stirred impotently like a dream in the hearts of its singers and great captains was active in the consciences of thousands who sickened at the moral disorder about them, and who turned wistfully for deliverance to the *Man from the East!* One of the signs by which His coming had been foretold to the race from which He was to spring was this: that in His day a new knowledge of God would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The silence that preceded His birth was deep indeed. The heart of man had grown dumb with disgust. It is not to St. Paul alone that one must recur for evidences of that weariness of the spirit, that inevitable *tedium vitæ*, that we associate with cultivated Greek and Roman society, *when the whole world was at peace.* Lucretius has depicted not a few of the symptoms of the malady; and the next generation of writers gives us more. The fraction of civilized mankind which was not utterly brutalized by self-indulgence, waited expectantly. The waters were heaped up. All

things seemed to be held by a kind of spiritual stillness, as, when the tide is all but full, the earth seems to be held by the advancing majesty of the sea.

The experience of the individual soul, turning from a long defiant carnival of sin, or even emerging only half awakened from the apathy of a too-contented worldliness, is not radically different from that of the unregenerated pagan mass who heard that Word of God's omnipotence, as the Voice of a Child crying in the night. It needs Him, and feels its need, even in the height of its guilt, just as the earth feels the need of the sea. Some call it remorse; others call it the play of psychological law; the man of faith calls it the Voice of the Deep. Abyss summons abyss, now as in the beginning; and God leaves no conscience unquickened. We never know how deep our hearts are until we try to fill them with the world. When the tumult of the waters is hushed, and the Spirit broods above them, life is born. The first Christmas made that plain. May this last one that we have been keeping prove as vivifying!

The night in its passage marked its own high noon: St. Paul says that Our Lord came in the fulness of time. Was it the fulness of a calculated period of prophecy He had in mind, or the deeper fulness of human need? The two ideas are not really opposed. Jew, as he was, he was also a man of his times, shrewdly observant of the world about him, and profoundly read in its philosophy. *It was the noon of night!* The dark of Egypt was never

blacker. In the pages of Juvenal, of Ovid, of Lucian, of Petronius, the scholar may get glimpses of the things that were done laughingly in that dark. In the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans the Christian learns what an Apostle thought about it all. It was truly the high noon of the world's iniquity. Nor was Israel in much better case. Such religion as lingered with him was formal and exterior and ceremonious, rather than vital and of the heart. A popular writer of these days of bold conjecture has endeavored to construct scientifically a scholar's forecast of the world as it shall be known in the year two thousand. It is not a pleasing picture to contemplate. Most of us turn away from it, hoping it will not be quite as bad as all that. Yet he has only based his calculations on tendencies he has noted in modern society. But suppose we try to look backward? What savant will set the ancient world before us in its habit as it lived? He may rebuild its houses, and make charts of its cities, and all its stately highways; but will he reconstruct a single unregenerate heart, and lay it bare, so that we may look into it and understand? *That night is gone forever!* We thank God for it. It reached its noon at the hour in which Christ was born. The world that walked in its shadow was sucked down in a more awful flood than the tidal wave that swallowed Pharaoh and his hosts. It was drowned in the great waters of the love of God, which covered the earth in the Incarnation of His Son. Then came the morrow and its new cycle of less shameful years. First the Human Life of the Word,

then the Sacramental. We have It still in the Mass. Do we walk gladly in Its great light?

The Word of Thine Omnipotence: Although by the principle of " appropriation " power is always spoken of as one of the characteristics of the First Person of the Holy Trinity, yet in a very striking and awe-inspiring sense, the Word is often described as the *Strength of God. By Him were all things made!* What that mysterious and *appropriated* output of energy was (seeing that in Deity all action having reference to mere creaturehood is absolute and common, as we say, to each Person of the Sacred Triad), we may never know on this earth; but this we do know, Christ, the Word from the beginning, is very strong. He showed His divine strength in the manger, He showed it in His Passion, He shows it hourly in the Mass. No will can withstand Him, if He chooses to call. He is so victoriously mighty that He can draw us even while we remain free. From Him alone is the *will to believe;* from Him alone is the *will to co-operate.* In all things, in the ordinances of His grace, in His uncovenanted mercies, in His Sacraments, in His Mass, is He found to be by every faithful heart, *the Word of God's Omnipotence.*

The Lord hath begun to reign: Our Lord's Kingship is both hereditary and self-acquired. He won His right to reign over us; and *His dominion is from sea to sea, and from the flood*—that flood of silence overlaying the hearts that know Him not yet—*unto the world's end.* He reigns

over the imagination and understanding of the wise; He reigns over His Church, and sits *throned upon the praises of her elect;* He reigns in the Seven Sacraments, working greater wonders in their little room, than He wrought along the highways of Palestine. No throne of His glory, apart from that place of honor where He sits in His unveiled Humanity at the right hand of the Father, can compare with the altar-stone of the Mass. *O Emmanuel, Rex et Legifer noster!* It is by that daily-renewed rite that Israel's dream is made palpable. He is always with us there, Our true King and Law-giver; and His Kingship is gloriously sacramental. How is Catholicism as a creed and principle of living best externalized but in the Sacrifice of the Mass? He understood us well —though he was not of our religion—who wrote:

> It is the Mass that matters: it is the Mass that makes the difference, so hard to define, so subtle is it, yet so perceptible, between a Catholic country and a Protestant one, between Dublin and Edinburgh, between Havre and Cromer.

That is profoundly said. The difference is always in the idea we form of His Kingship. *O Emmanuel, Rex et Legifer noster!*

He hath robed Him with beauty: There must be something wonderfully winning and noble in unspoiled human nature, when the King's Son stooped to make it the garment of His majesty. Is not that half the secret of the spell that simplicity of character always lays upon us? How that first act of divine condescension has in-

creased and fructified! As Mary's Son He wore her likeness in the flesh, and the world has bowed to the majesty of that borrowed beauty. As Head of His Church, as Head of the Mystical Body of which saints and martyrs are the members, He wears His mother's likeness in a more transfigured guise. Think of the types of character, male and female, with which faith in His Sacraments and belief in the Mass have enriched the world! *He hath robed Himself with these souls;* they are the outer beauty of that inward holiness which we shall all behold one day, *when we shall have been transformed.* Meanwhile we adore Him daily in the Elements. *O Oriens, Splendor lucis æternæ et Sol justitiæ! O Thou Day-Dawn of true Manhood, Brightness of Eternal Light and Sun of Righteousness, come and shed Thy rays upon them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; robe Thee with our regenerated selves; make beautiful the mystical vesture of Thy royalty!*

The Sunday before Epiphany

N. B.—The Sunday within the Octave of the Circumcision has no office of its own; and as the Introit of the Vigil of Epiphany is the same as that of the Sunday after Christmas, we have thought it better to go on to the great feast of the Epiphany itself.

INTROIT: Malach. iii and Ps. lxxi, 2.
EPISTLE: Is. lx, 1-7.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. ii, 1-13.

Introitus: Ecce advenit Dominator Dominus: et regnum in manu ejus et potestas et imperium.

Deus judicium tuum regi da: et justitiam tuam filio regis.

The Entrance Versicle: *Behold, the Lord, the Ruler cometh: And in His hand is kingly sway and power and dominion.*

Give Thy judgeship to the King, O God, and Thy sense of justice to the King's Son.

BEHOLD, the Lord, the Ruler, cometh: The Magi sought Christ and found Him as King. *Where is He that is born Ruler of the Jews?* Other Princes and Captains of the chosen people had achieved kingship by their own industry; they had won it in battle, had entered into it on a great wave of popular enthusiasm,

or had discovered it, so to say, unexpectedly at the door of their tents, when it had been thrust upon them by the suffrages of the Tribes; but here was One in Bethlehem Whose over-lordship came to Him by the inalienable right of His twofold nature. He was King, because God was always the Ruler of His People, Israel; and because, as Mary's human Son, He was the heir to David's royalty. It was in this latter character, it would seem, that the Wise Men from the East endeavored to find Him. Was their strange quest rewarded by a glimpse of His more exalted sovereignty? Did the warning that came to these voyagers in sleep reveal nothing of that unknown Child's eternal sway? The Gospel narrative is not perfectly clear; but it is not by any means forcing the text to suppose that *the other way* by which they returned into their own country was an omen to them of higher and better things to be realized henceforth in their sequestered lives. It is not too much to conjecture that the sight of the Mother and the Child was to them as the morning twilight of faith, just as the coming of the star had been its first merciful premonition amid the darkness and the superstitions of their own social beliefs. The instinct of the devout has always lent color to this view. These aliens sought Him as King, that is, as embodying what was best and most exalted in their dreams of a Regenerator; and they found in Him a Royalty more compelling than any strange star could symbolize. *Risen was the Light of the Kingdom in Ephrata. The people that had walked*

in darkness had seen a new day; for unto them a Child was born, unto them a Son was given, and the government was upon His shoulder; His name was to be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Strong God, Father of the Age to be, and Prince of Peace.

What Our Lord did for the Gentiles in that manifestation of Himself, He does for every people in every age. His Epiphanies are in proportion to the world's apprehension of Him. Circumscribed ideals beget circumscribed and narrow theologies; and a narrow theology begets a subjectively inadequate Christ, a King shorn of His proper Gifts. Over against each separate and distorted conception of Our Lord, evolved fitfully from the sick brain of heresy or of unbelief—*ægri somnia*—we have at every epoch in the march of Christian progress the Church's reading of the heavenly sign by which the Wise Men were impelled to seek Him. He alone can satisfy the deeper expectation of humanity; and it is in and through His Church exclusively that dreams and portents of His coming are proved satisfying and true. How meanly, after all, heresy has conceived of Christ! How poor is the world's measure of His royalty since His Church was politically discrowned and disinherited by the men of the Teutonic races four hundred years ago! To thousands of the hearts of our time He is become a mere exterior seventh-day influence, a kind of sabbatic deity, with no real sovereignty over the inner life; whereas in Himself He claims an absolutely unrestricted allegiance.

He exacts a willing service from the entire man. Intelligence and will, imagination, brain, and heart alike, must know Him as King; and there should be no sphere of the moral life, whether in civism or politics, social or domestic intercourse, in which He does not rule. *Behold the Lord, the Ruler, cometh!*

In His hand is kingly sway and power and dominion: The Church of Christ is always in defeat, yet they that withstand her are forever broken in pieces. She imposed the yoke of Her Lord's dominion on pagan society, and she taught the barbarian to acclaim Him as King. On modern thought she lays her sceptre, in spite of the scorn expressed for some of the most venerable of her pronouncements in the schools from which her teachers have been cast out. To the flippant unbelief of the eighteenth and earlier nineteenth century has succeeded the searching of heart, the intellectual unrest, which is not the least significant mark of our own. *It may be true after all,* the spiritual outlander cries. Industrialism, too, which constitutes the one entrenched system into which Our Lord's message of charity and self-forgetfulness has hitherto never been allowed to penetrate, begins at last to show fear of His sovereignty. The Socialism, which was despised and repressed so long as it remained sullenly aloof from all participation in His methods, is accounted a true force now that it has been baptized as Christian or Catholic democracy. Names and shibboleths count for little when ideas are at stake: but, if one thing is clear

to the student of modern tendencies, it is this, that the Church, which was dispossessed by the kings and states who found her sovereignty too irksome, bids fair to become more royally established than ever before in her chequered history, through the gradually growing response of the millions of wage-earners to Him, through Whom democracies, not less than kings, *decree just things.*

Give thy Judgeship to the King, O God; and Thy sense of justice to the King's Son: Our Lord is King over the individual heart and conscience, as well as over the outer realm of the exterior Church. He sits within and gives judgment. *He is the Light that enlighteneth every man coming into this world.* Do we think of conscience as an impersonal arbiter always, a mere pronouncement of the impartial reason, adjudicating between the claims of right and wrong? That may be a true way of conceiving of it, but it is also an inadequate way. Conscience without Christ is a court in the control of flunkies and menials. Open wide the gates and let the King but enter in, and how august will all its enactments then become! The fine sensibility of the Catholic instinct for virtue is no mere derivative of civilization; it is one of the gifts wherewith mankind will be enriched in Christ, if it will only accept His Kingship now. *His sense of justice is the reward He never fails to impart to the loyalty that hails Him as Lord and Ruler, coming to us with sway and power and dominion in His hand.*

The Sunday within the Octave of Epiphany

Introit: A scriptural paraphrase, followed by Ps. xcix, 1.

Epistle: Rom. xii, 1-5.

Gospel: S. Luke, ii, 42-52.

Introitus: In excelso throno vidi sedere virum quem adorat multitudo angelorum psallentes in unum; ecce cujus imperii nomen est in æternum.

Jubilate Deo, omnis terra: servite Domino in lætitia.

The Entrance Versicle: *Upon a lofty throne I beheld a Man sit Him down, and a multitude of Angels, singing psalms together, do worship Him: Behold, the might of His empire is unto eternity.*

Make a joyful noise unto God, O all ye lands: Serve the Lord in gladness.

UPON a lofty throne I beheld a Man sit Him down: As often as we recite the Creed we make profession of our faith in the reality of this vision. *I believe in Jesus Christ,* we say, *Who sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father almighty.* Unaided human nature might have gone up very far in the scale of being. It is right to solace one's self with that thought; for all the divine

works are good and perfect; but unaided human nature never would have reached to God, as we have known Him and apprehended Him in Christ. In Him we have touched Deity and made It our own; we are become Gods and Sons of the Most High. A Catholic may think of the Epiphany in many ways, since no one way will ever exhaust it; but perhaps the most profitable way of all is to think of it as the revelation of human nature unto itself. Christ is the solution of the great riddle, not only to collective mankind, but to the individual soul also. In Him we begin to realize how royal we are. The throne of His majesty is our throne likewise. We are born to rule. The sense of destiny is the best of educators. Does not every voyaging heart prove the truth of that fact early or late—oftenest too late, alas!—in it earthly career? Our destiny is to kingship and dominion. Heaven is no mere place of quietude. The Vision that beatifies calls forth our highest activities. That is the Schoolmen's account of it. To reign with Christ cannot mean to be eternally indolent. The zest that comes of all healthy effort will lose none of its edge because renewed without grief in glory. In what will that participated sovereignty consist? Over whom shall we rule? How shall we play the King? That does not yet appear; but the metaphor is true none the less; and it was not for nothing that Our Lord Himself insisted upon it so often during His mundane life. As our ennobling in Him, our divinization, begins here, so may our actual kingship, if we are provident and wise. We may rule over our passions, over the native

inconstancy of our wills, substituting the will of the Man, that is, the will of the newer Self grown Christ, for the whimsicalities of the child, who has played at kingship on the throne of the heart too long; we may rule over pain, over bodily sickness, over ill-fortune and undeserved defeat, over contempt and opprobrium even, wearing a King's untroubled face and showing a Man's fortitude through them all; better still, because more royally, more divinely difficult, we may rule over worldly favor, over influence and power and wealth and all the things that come trooping in the train of the Tempter called Success, by holding steadfastly to our King's ideals, as we find them explicitly enforced in the Sermon on the Mount, or faintly, but pathetically, foreshadowed in the glimpse of His true over-lordship vouchsafed to the Magi who came worshipping His star.

Upon a lofty throne I beheld a Man sit Him down: See the revenges of time, and the inconsistencies of human speculation! A student of natural phenomena, groping painfully for a clew to unity amid the bewildering variety of life and matter, as they are met with on this planet, hazards a theory which seems to jar harshly upon our preconceived notions of sonship in God. For a time some are dazed. *Fascinatio nugacitatis!* Nothing hypnotizes the minds of cultivated men more inevitably than a plausibly facile theory in science or metaphysics. Even Catholics are affected by it in a hundred secret and indescribable ways without making formal surrender of

any explicit position of revealed faith. Then comes a reaction. Somebody discovers, either that the facts have not been so skilfully read, or that the theory, which pretends to account for them, will bear a more spiritual connotation. If the reported beginnings of life are so outrageous to all healthy human pride, its goal, at any rate, is somewhere beyond the stars. Somewhere we find traces of

> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves!

If all is not well with the individual, the type at any rate will be built up. That is how many affect to reason. It is not necessary to impugn the substantial accuracy of much that they bring forward. There would seem to be a sense in which it is permissibly tenable; but how hollow it rings, how unsatisfying as a supreme theory of morals to the heart that feels its own royalty and longs to assert it, what a dull, lack-lustre face it wears, when tested by the gold that every true king-seeker brings, who follows unfalteringly the star that has risen out of his particular darkness! Oh, Christ loves the type! Nothing truer was ever uttered; but He loves the individual more than the type. He loved *me;* He gave Himself up for *me!*

> For though the Giant Ages heave the hill
> And break the shore, and evermore
> Make and break and work their will;
> Though world on world in myriad myriads roll
> Round us, each with different powers,
> And other forms of life than ours,
> What know we greater than the soul?

He, the definite, the individual Christ, King and Life-Giver, is the separate and particular destiny of every heart that loves and aspires. There is no spirituality possible for the men of this century without that saving truth, let sophists and pseudo-scientists prate as they will. *Upon a lofty throne I beheld a Man sit Him down!*

A multitude of Angels do worship Him: We gather from the scattered suggestions of Scripture that the Angels are pure intelligences, who cannot be numbered for multitude. Like the just on earth their life in heaven seems to alternate between service and worship. Apart from that we can form but few notions about them, though we are to be their fellows in beatitude, and though One of our own race and kind, the Man Christ, Who is also God, receives their homage, and, in receiving it adds to their happiness forever. The instinct of the Church seems to associate them in some mysterious manner with the Mass. It is idle to speculate at length on these problems; it is much better to emulate what we know of their excellence and be, in our own turn, the ministers of a worship in every way as unquestioning and as steadfast.

Singing psalms together: The Mass is a public act of supreme adoration. Apart from the central Truth of the sacrifice, the Real Presence of the Victim, namely, which gives it all its value, that corporate characteristic of it alone ought to make us careful how we hear it.

Christ, no doubt, is glorified, and the soul of man is enriched, by any form of service that comes genuinely from the heart; but the service that He Himself has exacted is always more pleasing to Him than any other. *Do this*, He says, *in commemoration of Me*. It is not enough to be present merely in the body. If we are content with that, we may escape the imputation of ecclesiastical disobedience, but we shall not receive the promised blessing of Our Lord. A sacrifice is a sacred thing done by all who are called to take part in it. It is not performed vicariously always. This is a principle that has a larger bearing than many suppose. Good people, devout people, men and women of the cloister even, often spend the precious half hour of Mass in private forms of devotion strangely and distractingly out of keeping with the liturgy, as we find it enjoined in the Missal. These hearts, in so far as they are sincere and God-fearing, are Angels, doubtless, in their worship; but they do not *sing psalms together. To worship the Man as the Church worships Him daily in the Host set upon the high throne of her altars*, it is necessary to advert to His presence and to follow the mystical action of the rite by which we know Him sacramentally. That may be done by a set formulary of words, or it may be done by secret prayer; it cannot be done if we dissipate our attention by unseasonable or by alien expressions of private piety. Great mischief is done to souls, and opportunities of progress are wasted, because too many are suffered to grow up in ignorance of the primary lessons of a liturgy which is as

enduringly eloquent, and as fortifying to faith, as the spectacle of the Church herself. *The Mass is the Church in action, in worship.* All her past history, the best epitome of her manifold teaching, the very substance of her holiest hope, is crowded into that mysterious half hour. Oh, if we had but wisdom to use it well, *psallentes in unum.*

The Second Sunday after Epiphany

INTROIT: Ps. lxv, 4 and 1.
EPISTLE: Rom. xii, 6-16.
GOSPEL: S. John, ii, 1-11.

Introitus: Omnis terra adoret te, Deus, et psallat tibi: psalmum dicat nomini tuo, Altissime.

Jubilate Deo, omnis terra, psalmum dicite nomini ejus: date gloriam laudi ejus.

The Entrance Versicle: *Let all the earth adore Thee, and sing psalms unto Thee, O God: Yea, let it sing psalms unto Thy Name, O Thou Most High.*

Make a joyful noise unto God, O all ye lands, sing psalms unto His Name: Glorify Him for His praise.

LET all the earth adore Thee: Our Lord came to establish a world-church. The society of the faithful on earth was to be one and indivisible in Him. If He Himself had not dared to suggest it, we might well shrink from making the awful comparison; but the inner Life of the Sacred Trinity in heaven is the divine Analogue by which our oneness here in time is to be patterned. *That they may be one, Father, as Thou and I are one. . . . That they may be one in Us!* All over

the wide world, in spite of estranging barriers of race or speech, of antecedent history or political ideals, those who have *learned Christ in unity* profess the same creed and give expression to the spell it lays upon the heart by a form of outer devotion which is marvellously and miraculously one. Catholicity of belief, therefore, has its correlative in Catholicity of worship. One Lord and Head, Who is Christ, one message, which is His Good Word to mankind, one all-interpreting Rite, the Eucharist Sacrifice of the Mass, in which His priests have been instructed by a living tradition running through an unbroken line of mystagogues up to the great High Priest who first celebrated It on the night before He suffered—that is the true account that history gives of the orthodox body, whether we find it in the vast industrial centres of the twentieth century, in the feudal strongholds of the thirteenth, or in the imperial capital of the first. The world changes, mankind changes, Catholics change; but the Mass never changes. *Jesus Christ, yesterday, to-day, and forever!* All the earth is summoned to adore Him; and by the Mass alone can that enjoined worship be kept holy and true. This is the *Clean Oblation* of which the prophet dreamed. Is it not a privilege to share in such an act of religion? Does it not lift us out of our pettiness, and make us one with all mankind, one with God? This is the great sign of our citizenship. Oh, let us make much of this birthright. We acquired it when we were born anew in Christ. Let us think upon it often, even when we cannot be present in the body at its august func-

tion. By such devout meditation we become Catholic in deed as well as in name. We are of all times and countries, and our lives are ecumenic.

Let all the earth sing psalms to Thee, O God: The deeper thoughts of Israel, which, in spite of his many infidelities, were always to God-ward, have flowed out upon the earth since Our Lord's day in rivers of sacred song. No other race can show an achievement in spiritual literature comparable to the psalms. *Non fecit taliter omni nationi.* The experience of the Children of Abraham was singular and unique; their poetry, like everything else, marked them off from the generality of mankind. The something in their corporate spirit that had singled them out to become in time the Elect of God, ran like the burden of a veiled prophet through their written remains of chronicle, religious canticle and forecast. Their half-blind obedience to divine instincts was to save them in the long event. Their hunger for God was to be satisfied at last. The Star that was to arise out of Jacob, the Hope that had gone vaguely, yet visibly, before them through the Arabian waste, like a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day, grew definite when David sang. The Holy One became a Person. In the psalms His face is hardly concealed; His prophesying is unmistakable and clear. The Anointed One, the fuller, diviner Christ, sings there; and how persuasively He fills the consciences of all those who have ever trained their hearts to listen. He is the God of the soul in every versicle of them, the

God of the withdrawn and meditative life. Out of all that organ-like tumult of balanced phrasing, sad or glad, or dark with heavenly meanings, that is the one unfaltering message. *God is great in Jewry; in Israel is His name known; but the heart of man is His holiest kingdom.*

No wonder that the psalms have become the Church's prayer-book. All her past and present sorrows, all her inevitable triumphs are recorded in those wonderful rhythms. The lightnings of Sinai flash through them, tempered by the sweeter day-springs of the divine Righteousness feeling Its way tentatively into our human dark. All the gamut of religious emotion is sounded through that century and a half of inspired hymns. Our Lord loved them so well that He died murmuring one of the most pathetic of them, as though to ease His awful pain. What Israel aspired to when the liturgical psalm was written from which to-day's Introit is taken, has, through the Church's instinctive love of the psalter, become literally fulfilled. All the sons of men to-day are instructed in psalmody. *The sound of King David's canticles is gone forth into the world, and their words to the ends of the earth.* And yet there are many Catholics to whom the psalter is a sealed, or at best an alien, book, in spite of the fact that Church councils and fathers, doctors and innumerable choirs of saints have urged upon priests and laymen alike, to make daily use of their inexhaustible riches. By one of the cruelest of those ironies of history,

from which not even the Church of Christ seems to be wholly free, the institution of the "Canonical Hours," for which the champions of orthodoxy made so determined a stand at Trent, is hardly known except to priests and religious to-day. For a layman to attempt to make himself familiar with the contents of the Breviary, to be able to recite the psalms in any intelligible or authorized translation, is to be accounted singular forsooth! Indeed one sometimes hears it maintained that a preference for psalmody is a note of secret disaffection, and betrays a leaning towards unbelief. How perverse such reasoning is! Is it not as though some "captive by the waters of Babylon" were to refuse even so much as to remember "his own songs," because the Chaldean loved them? Let us make much, if we will, of the "new things" in Our Lord's goodly treasure-house of ritual and devotion; the Church is a living organization and she must grow always; but let us not forget the old in our zeal for the new. Let us account it shameful to be unfamiliar with the psalms. Like all that is deepest in Scripture they are both new and old to the heart that endeavors to understand them. *So shall all the earth sing psalms unto Thee, O God.*

The Third Sunday after Epiphany

INTROIT: Ps. xcvi, 7, 8 and 1.
EPISTLE: Rom. xii, 16-21.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. viii, 1-13.

*Introitus:** Adorate Deum, omnes Angeli ejus: audivit et lætata est Sion: et exsultaverunt filiæ Judæ.

Dominus regnavit, exsultet terra: lætentur insulæ multæ.

The Entrance Versicle: *Give worship unto God, all ye His Angels: Sion heard and was glad: And the daughters of Juda rejoiced exceedingly.*

The Lord hath begun to reign: Let the earth rejoice exceedingly: Let the multitude of isles be glad.

GIVE worship unto God, all ye His Angels: If the Mass is one of the greatest triumphs of the Incarnation, the visible proof, in the millions that flock to it daily, that the Word has not abased Himself in vain, there is a peculiar fitness in summoning the Angels to have part in its mysterious worship. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that when the Father *introduced*

* The Introit for the remaining Sundays after Epiphany does not change until Septuagesima.

His First-Begotten into the world command was given that *all Angels should adore Him.* It was as though the emptying out of Godhead, which was involved in that infinite descent, constituted, to our human thinking, at least, a fresh title to service from the most intellectual of His creatures. Is it a mere stretch of pious fancy to suppose, therefore, that the new worship which began with Our Lord's first entrance into Mary's womb is continued hourly in the more mysterious entrance He makes upon the altars of His Church, or in the Sacramental indwelling He establishes in those who communicate? Indeed, if the divine abasement was understood to be a new motive for adoration in the one case, much more may we consider it a motive for a wholly unique kind of homage in the other. The Deity, which in St. Paul's bold metaphor was all but wasted for our sakes in the Incarnation, is still more prodigally tendered here; the very Humanity which endeared It to us, even while veiling It, in a measure, from men's eyes, is hidden under the Sacramental species, condemned by Its too great thirst for sacrifice to submit to modes of being that a thinker as orthodox as De Lugo does not hesitate to describe as constructive annihilation. The Catholic instinct that loves to imagine the sanctuary at Mass time as empeopled with hosts of adoring Angels has a whole world of theology behind it.

Sion heard and was glad: The Church's intuitions are always in advance of her explicit teaching. How many centuries she allowed to elapse, for instance, before

she defined carefully and above all possibility of further cavil the truths involved in St. John's declaration that *the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us.* And yet from the beginning there could be no doubt as to the quality of her worship. So, too, with regard to her undefined beliefs in the various offices and ministrations of the heavenly spirits, her practice has for centuries past been illuminatingly broader than her theory. On the latter score she has been strangely, sometimes perplexingly, voiceless and dark. Witness her action in the person of St. Zachary in the eighth century. How rigid was the rebuke administered by the Roman See of that epoch to the mad Bishop Adalbert! This is the more noteworthy when we recall the testimony of writers like Origen, of fathers like St. Hilary and St. Augustine. St. Chrysostom actually maintained that the Angels depended in great measure for their knowledge of the holy mysteries on the explicit teaching of the Church; and he used this contention as an argument for the enhanced dignity that human nature had acquired in Christ. How are we to understand all this save as an intimation that we are to leave subtleties and vain speculations aside, and, like Sion, *hear and be glad?* We know that we are in the care of pure intelligences who always *see the face of Our Father in heaven.* We know that these mysterious personalities have been intimately associated with all the theophanies of the Old Testament, and that they seem to have a part likewise in the everlasting theophany vouchsafed to us in Christ. It was by His favor that

they found strength to be faithful in the day of trial. They have shared in the merits of His passion as mysteriously as ourselves. They have some part, it would appear, in the economy of His Kingdom on earth. To know this much is enough for the devout soul. Let us try to correspond to their ministrations. Let us invoke their aid to a purer and more rapt worship at the moment of the Elevation. *It is then that Sion hears them and is glad!*

The daughters of Juda rejoiced exceedingly: There is comfort for all mothers in Christendom in the thought of the Guardian spirits of their little ones. More than any other class of souls in the Church they have part in the service of the Angels. Since they share in their divine vocation let them share, too, in their worship. Let them try to link their lives with these heavenly overseers of the young by encouraging their charges to go frequently to Mass. The young man or the young woman who has acquired that Catholic habit in early life is not likely to wander far afield when the day of trial comes in after years. Think of the graces he will have heaped up in the treasure-house of the heart! Think of the friends he will have made by lifelong familiarity with the Angels of the Holy Eucharist! All of us have reason to be glad when we think of the manifold devices for our sanctification contrived for us in the offices of Holy Church; but the *Daughters of Juda,* the mothers that bore us and trained us, have reason *to rejoice exceedingly.*

The Lord hath begun to reign: The best and most practical proof that Christ is King in a Catholic's heart is the attitude which that heart maintains towards the daily Sacrifice of the Mass. How manifold and far-reaching are the demands made upon the careful conscience, if this duty of our religion is to be performed meetly and with joy! We live in an age that occupies itself in season and out of season with tests. We wish to bring all things to the proof. The impulse is not a bad one, if only it be grounded in sincerity. Here, then, is a test for your own individual Catholicism. What use do you make of the morning Sacrifice? Do you begin the day *eucharistically*, that is, with a sort of *sacramental thanksgiving*, by establishing Our Lord as King in your heart? If you cannot be present every day, what use do you make of the Sunday office? Do you begin the week by acknowledging that divine kingship before the parish altar? Do you try, like a wise captain, to map out your activities beforehand? Do you endeavor to make provision for the needs of all the forces of your heart, by renewing them in loyalty? Are you instant in waiting? Are you known *in the face of the Church* as diligent in the solemn audiences of your liege Lord?

The Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

INTROIT: Ps. xcvi, 7, 8 and 1.
EPISTLE: Rom. xiii, 8-10.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. viii, 23-27.

Introitus: Adorate Deum, omnes Angeli ejus: audivit et lætata est Sion: et exsultaverunt filiæ Judæ.

Dominus regnavit, exsultet terra: lætentur insulæ multæ.

The Entrance Versicle: *Give worship unto God, all ye His Angels: Sion heard and was glad: And the daughters of Juda rejoiced exceedingly.*

The Lord hath begun to reign: Let the earth rejoice exceedingly: Let the multitude of isles be glad.

GIVE worship unto God, all ye His angels: To pronounce confidently on the mysteries of beatitude is neither reverent nor wise. *Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive* what manner of life the blessed lead in heaven. We only know that *it is good to be there.* Yet it is not wrong to feed our more devout conjectures with such partial anticipations as have been vouchsafed us in Holy

Writ and been explained further by the writings of doctors and saints. Only we must not think that because we have been enriched by a stimulating phrase or two we have thereby encompassed the mystery of the ineffable thing. It is more seemly to take refuge in St. Paul's attitude after all. We do not know; so long as we are held prisoners in these bodies of death we never can know; yet we have learned Christ in part. The very apostle who enjoins upon us to cultivate love's despair bids us likewise remember that *we are Christ's*, here as well as hereafter; that *in Him and through Him and by Him are all things established*. He is at once the pattern and the living grace of all our prayers on earth. *It is through Him and in Him and with Him* that the body of the elect, angels and redeemed sons of Adam, worship the Father worthily in heaven. The Church has never forgotten that apostolic teaching. One Name gives the sweet compelling word wherewith her prayers and collects must always end. *Through Christ Our Lord*, the priest says; and the people make reply: *Amen! So be it!* At what seems to the onlooker the most pathetic moment of the sacred Action, when priest and congregation alike beg for some share and fellowship in that life of the Saints which the Mass prefigures, the Host is taken up once more and held above the Consecrated Chalice, while the celebrant pronounces the Church's form of the ancient words: *Through Him and in Him and with Him do all honor and glory belong to Thee, O God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost forever and ever!* He is Alpha and Omega;

the Beginning and the end; no angel may adore save through Him. Let that sense of the Introit, therefore, ring like a refrain in the heart all day to-day. The most critical test of character, whether in the case of men or heavenly spirits, is to be found in the attitude of the will toward the Word's abasement in the Incarnation: *Give worship unto Our God, all ye His Angels!*

Sion heard and was glad: If it is *through Christ and with Christ and in Christ* that all glory belongs to the Father, may we believe that the service of the Angels is mysteriously linked with the holier service of the Mass? Who can say? Our Lord Himself, when celebrating this holy rite on the eve of His passion, reminded " His own " that He would not partake again of that *Fruit of the Vine* until they sat at meat with Him in His Father's house. Is the Mass that has been our source of joy on earth to be continued hereafter as part of the ritual of heaven. That, too, is a Mystery which can be solved only in the fulness of time and in the Church. Meanwhile it is enough for us to know that *Sion hears and is glad* as often as that supreme act of religion is performed. *Let the daughters of Juda rejoice!*

The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

Introit: Ps. xcvi, 7 and 1.
Epistle: Col. iii, 12-17.
Gospel: S. Matt. xiii, 24-30.

Introitus: Adorate Deum omnes Angeli ejus: audivit et lætata est Sion: et exsultaverunt filiæ Judæ.

Dominus regnavit, exsultet terra: lætentur insulæ multæ.

The Entrance Versicle: *Give worship unto God, all ye His Angels: Sion heard and was glad: And the daughters of Juda rejoiced exceedingly.*

The Lord hath begun to reign: Let the earth rejoice exceedingly: Let the multitude of isles be glad.

GIVE worship unto God, all ye His Angels: This reading, which the Church adopts in her Entrance Versicle to-day, and for the following Sunday, is found in the Vulgate, the Syriac, and Septuagint versions of the Holy Scripture; and it has colored so many of our habitual thoughts about the service offered unintermittently to Jehovah in heaven, that we cannot do

better than follow its accommodated sense, and draw out more fully the considerations to which its liturgical use would seem to lend value. *Give worship unto God, all ye His Angels!* It is not the gods of the heathen world, then, who are summoned to join in Israel's religious rites, but the unseen ministers of healing and grace whom Catholics revere as guardian spirits. When Our Lord bared Himself of glory and lay in swaddling bands amid the obscurity and neglect of Bethlehem, angels proclaimed His praise and won Him His first warm-hearted worshippers. When His human life was in danger, owing to Herod's superstitious fear, one of their host provided for Him a way of escape. When physical exhaustion overtook Him at the close of His great trial in the desert, they ministered to Him. When the vision of the last bitter struggle made His human will falter under the olive trees in Gethsemane, they came and comforted Him. When He rose from the dead, they spread abroad the tidings of His triumph. When He returned to His place in splendor at the right hand of God, they sent down His last message of warning to the Church. *This Jesus shall come again!* And He has come, not as Judge, but as Life and Food. He comes to us daily. *As the living Father hath sent Me and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.* Is it any wonder that Catholics love to think of the sanctuary as the presence chamber where angels adore? St. Chrysostom's view, which has ever been the more popular one, is founded on a deep instinct of faith. If angels busied

themselves about the human life of the Word, are they not more likely to busy themselves about that same human Life sacramentalized? Oh, not for that first baffling entrance at Bethlehem only, but for each more baffling analogue of it provided in the daily Sacrifice of the Mass, is it true to assert: *When He bringeth in the First Begotten into the world, He saith: And let all the angels of God adore Him!*

Sion heard and was glad: The Church's joy in the Real Presence manifests itself in a thousand ways; extravagant ways, they often seem to the mere economist and the unbeliever. In the poetry of her liturgy, in the splendor of her vestments, her incense, her lights, her sacred music, her imposing architecture, there is but one glad message, one soul of worship, singing deliriously through it all:

Panis angelicus fit panis hominum!

The Bread of Angels has become the daily food of her children in a sense never dreamed of by the eight faithful Levites who assembled the people for worship in the days of Ezra the Scribe, and gave her the phrase she loves so well: *Thou hast given them Bread from heaven for their hunger,* she cries, *Thou hast brought them forth water out of the Rock for their thirst.* There are Catholics so little steeped in tradition, so dull to the eloquence of faith and devotion, that they would surrender the sacred accumulations of centuries and reduce the

Mass to a colder and simpler rite. These men are without the historic sense; and what is worse, they have no heart of joy in their religion. Pray that such souls may *hear and be glad.*

The daughters of Juda rejoiced: By an inevitable law of development the rites and practices of the Roman Church—Mother and Mistress of all Churches, as being identified with St. Peter's See—have come to prevail throughout Western Christendom. Yet she has been sweetly tolerant of other usages that have come down from Apostolic times. The Churches of the East, which have remained in union with her, have shared in her eucharistic joy. Their more ornate liturgies are, in a sense, a living proof of her own abiding gladness in the presence of that Hidden Lord, Who is King over Sion and Who makes Himself felt *in the multitude of the isles.* As the towns of which Jerusalem was the capital shared in the glory of David's triumphs, celebrated in this glowing psalm, so do the various "Uniates" participate in the gladness of Rome, the true Sion of our hopes.

The Lord hath begun to reign: Belief in the Real Presence is one of those puzzling articles of our Catholic faith over which the many stumble. If they could be induced to accept that, much would be easy; but until they do, nothing will be well with them. *Jehovah will not begin to reign.* His kingship is set up only in the heart *that comes to Him.* In the early ages when *those who*

stood without not only reported falsely of us, but persecuted and profaned and destroyed, the Church was obliged to protect herself by the *Discipline of the Secret*. Unbelievers were not admitted to the celebration of the Holy Mysteries. All that is changed now in the altered conditions of the modern world. There is nothing to prevent one bringing an enquiring soul to be present at the Mass, if there be hope of a true conversion. The *beginning of Our Lord's reign* in many a heart dates from such an event. It is good, therefore, to encourage that kind of apostolate; only let it be done with a sweet discretion. Sinners, too, who cannot be induced to make their peace with God, might be persuaded, at least, to come to a Mass; for them, also, will Jehovah begin to reign, and His gladness be felt *in the isles that are afar*.

The Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

INTROIT: Ps. xcvi, 7 and 1.
EPISTLE: 1 Thess. i, 1-10.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. xiii, 31-35.

Introitus: Adorate Deum omnes Angeli ejus: audivit et lætata est Sion: et exsultaverunt filiæ Judæ.

Dominus regnavit, exsultet terra: lætentur insulæ multæ.

The Entrance Versicle: *Give worship unto God, all ye His Angels: Sion heard and was glad: And the daughters of Juda rejoiced exceedingly.*

The Lord hath begun to reign: Let the earth rejoice: Let the multitude of isles be glad.

GIVE worship unto God, all ye His Angels: One of the four great purposes of the Sacrifice of the Mass, as theologians remind us, is that God's intelligent creatures may offer Him a meet and fitting act of worship. By this rite, more strikingly than by any other, has every true believer learned *how great is Jehovah's Name among the Gentiles.* The Mass is the *Clean Oblation* in which He cannot but be well pleased. Some such idea as that runs through all the sacred liturgies that have come down to

us. It is explicitly embodied in the Canon of the Sacrifice as we find it in the Roman Missal to-day. After the consecrated Elements have been lifted up, that all may see and adore, the priest resumes his secret prayer, recalling with a kind of grave succinctness, the three most triumphant episodes in Our Lord's human life, His Passion, His victory over the grave and His return to His place of power at the right hand of the Father; and he goes on to say: *Out of the gifts that Thou hast given us, we offer to Thy glorious Majesty a pure Victim, a holy Victim, a Victim without blemish, the Sacred Bread of life everlasting and the Chalice of perpetual health.* It is the sacrifice of our worship, and in order that we who take part in it may be filled to overflowing with all heavenly blessings and favors, we beseech Almighty God to allow it *to be borne up by the hands of His holy Angel to the Altar which is on high.* That Angel is the Word Himself, Our ever Blessed Lord, Who is both Priest and Victim. *He is the true Angel of Jehovah Who goeth before His people;* through Him have we access to the home of Our Father *in the land which is far off.* Most fitting is it, therefore, to unite all the choirs of the heavenly host to adore Our Hidden God, when He, Who is their Prince from of old, and Who is set above them even in His human nature for His obedience sake, performs that all-sufficing act of true religion, which we join in daily when we assist devoutly at a Mass. Let their more spiritual and discerning service make amends for our strange perfunctoriness. *Give worship unto God, all ye His Angels!*

Sunday in Septuagesima

INTROIT: Ps. xvii, 3, 4, 5 and 1.
EPISTLE: Cor. ix, 24-5, x.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. xx, 1-16.

Introitus: Circumdederunt me gemitus mortis, dolores inferni circumdederunt me: et in tribulatione mea invocavi Dominum, et exaudivit, de templo sancto suo, vocem meam.

Diligam te, Domine, fortitudo mea: Dominus firmamentum meum, et refugium meum, et liberator meus.

The Entrance Versicle: *The sorrows of death compassed me, the griefs of the nether-world circled me about: Then in my trouble I called upon the Lord, and out of His holy temple He heard my cry.*

I will love Thee, O God, my Strength: The Lord is my Support and my Refuge, the Lord is my Deliverer.

THE days that commemorate Our Lord's childhood are over. That cycle of His epiphanies is closed for another year. The Gentiles have seen a great light; and it is for the individual hearts who have been gladened by It to walk henceforth in its shining. Though

Christianity may have its general message for the race, its deepest lessons are always intended to be learned separately and one by one by the souls who have been baptized into fellowship with Christ. After Epiphany come the twilight weeks that precede the solemn night-season of Lent. Religion is not all feasting and laughter; it is not all lights and ritual; it has its austerer, its more strenuous side, as well. Septuagesima is kept that we may realize that salutary truth. The appeal of the Church is primarily to the inner conscience. We are saved man by man, not in masses and corporately, as it were. It is not sufficient to profess our faith; it is not enough to be a Catholic; we must live our creed; and to live a creed that makes such demands as ours means daily effort of the most difficult kind. *In sudore vultus tui!* "*Go ye also,*" says Our Lord in the parable, "*Go ye also into my vineyard and work.*"

The sorrows of death compassed me: What a note of unseasonableness there seems to be about the Church's liturgy at times! When winter is at its darkest, she bids us remember our exceeding great Joy—*the Lord is nigh at hand.* When days grow long, and the first faint signs of returning vegetation show themselves upon the face of the earth, when the very sun in heaven begins to shine with a temperate and more invigorating warmth, we are reminded of death. *The griefs of the nether-world still circle us about.* Though the spring will surely come, it will bring no surcease from sinning, unless we

make Jehovah our Strength, and the Christ of the Eucharist our Refuge and Deliverer. Between the surface-bravery of things, that goodly show of health and vigor that the coming weeks will introduce, and our own inner sickness of heart, there is this discomforting lack of harmony always. Much, if not most of our trouble springs from that abysmal discord. But if out of the stress of it we call upon the Lord in faith, He will hear us *out of His holy temple.* It is through the sacramental system of His Church, that seven-fold river of healing, that the Health of God flows out upon the disorders of mankind; and it is through the Mass more abundantly than through any other divine channel, that the death in life, which we know as human infirmity, is changed into life in death, and man becomes radically more sound than nature itself. What though the sorrows of dissolution should compass us; it is the Real Presence that keeps us whole! *This is the Bread that cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die!*

The sorrows of death compassed me: No life that realizes itself approximately in this world can do so without sorrow. *Sunt lacrimæ rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt!* What can one do but weep, and get such comfort as he can from the sense of fellowship with all sufferers that is born in the heart with the sense of tears? Ah, tender and true as that is, it is but a pagan's philosophy at best. We Catholics have something higher; and it is not less surely human for being the more exalted. The

Mass will make us strong in the midst of bereavement, if we only learn how to use It. It will not make the grief less poignant; but it will increase our power of bearing it. *Blessed are they that mourn!* The sweetest ties must be broken some day. The visible bond of our holiest affections must be sundered for a while. Life is made up of leave-takings. Misunderstandings will arise; estrangements must come; and that stream of things without us that we call fate, or circumstance, or necessity, will catch up what is nearest and most precious to us, and bear it cruelly out of reach. It is a swelling flood, and the years do not abate it. Who can shape his own career? Who can fence it in from sorrow? Even if we escape lesser trials, the one great separation must be faced some day. One by one we must see our kinsfolk, our friends, and those we love dearer than life, "undergo the ceremony of death." Where shall we find help when these sorrows compass us round about? *Mentem mortalia tangunt!* Human sympathy will be a sure support for those who can turn to it; but in God's Holy Temple we shall discover a better Refuge and a more benign Deliverer. The Mass makes all things one. In that daily Sacrifice we shall dwell close to our own departed. Even the living that seemed to be torn from our side will come very near as we make our *memento* for them to the unseen Priest Who is the Overseer of all souls, the vigilant Shepherd of the Quick and the Dead. So long as we hold Christ by faith, and worship daily at His altar, we lose none of the good things that we once owed to His provi-

dence. The lifted Host is the pledge of that. Oh, let your heart go up with It when the priest takes It in His hands that all the assembly of the faithful may adore! *Sursum corda!* You are very rich during that half hour, if you only knew it.

> All that is, at all,
> Lasts ever, past recall;
> Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
> What entered into thee,
> That was, is, and shall be:
> Time's wheel runs back or stops: Potter and clay endure.

The griefs of the nether-world circled me about: Not all the grief of life is caused by or has to do with death. Sin has brought man more sorrow than all the dissolutions of the charnel-house. Let us remember that, when we sum up our little experiences and pass judgment on the great mystery of good and evil. It is a parti-colored world we pass our trial in. Mortal sin is the one misfortune that may be—so far as we are concerned—eternally irretrievable. The sorrows of Sheol, the griefs of the Land of Shadows, what are they for the God-fearing Catholic but the incitements to infidelity, the allurements, the temptations that meet him everywhere? And if he has fallen at any time, is it not part of his burden, even if he has risen and been forgiven in the tribunal of penance, that the remembrance of his transgression must haunt him always? Christian remorse may not be the healthiest of virtues, but it is profitable for some souls to be afflicted by it for a season. It is a painful good, like

sickness or bereavement, to certain types of character. It shows them what is in their own hearts. If we suffer from these griefs of the nether-world, let us look for an anodyne to their too consuming pain in the Sacrifice of the Mass. *In the midst of the heart's secret trouble let us call upon the Lord; and out of His holy temple will He hear our cry.*

The griefs of the nether-world: Constant fervor in devotion is the privilege of the few. The many have their lapses into tepidity. Even the very good are not free from this trial. There are moments when their enthusiasm flags, and all the brood of lower and worldly-wise ideals enters into the heart to drive out the hard-learned lessons of Our Lord. Seasons of consolation, as the masters of the spiritual life remind us, are invariably followed by times of desolation. *The griefs of the nether-world circle us about; and death seems to come up through our windows.* These are the hours for more assiduous service at Holy Mass; and when it is possible, we should communicate fervently, even from day to day, if a wise confessor will consent. It is by such *crying in the midst of trouble* that the Lord is moved to be our Support, our present Refuge and Deliverer.

Sunday in Sexagesima

Introit: Ps. xliii, 23-26 and 2.
Epistle: 2 Cor. xi, 19-9, xii.
Gospel: S. Luke viii, 4-15.

Introitus: Exsurge, quare obdormis, Domine? Exsurge, et ne repellas in finem: quare faciem tuam avertis, oblivisceris tribulationem nostram? Adhæsit in terra venter noster: exsurge, Domine, adjuva nos, et libera nos.

Deus, auribus nostris audivimus: patres nostri annuntiaverunt nobis.

The Entrance Versicle: *Rouse Thee, why sleepest Thou, O Lord? Rouse Thee, and cast us not off forever: Why dost Thou turn Thy face away, forgetting our affliction? Our belly hath cleaved to the ground: Rouse Thee, O Lord: Help us and set us free.*

O God, we have heard with our ears: Our fathers have rehearsed unto us.

ROUSE Thee, why sleepest Thou, O Lord? Again and again will this thought recur to us as we follow the mind of the Church through the varying liturgy of the year. Why does God seem to be asleep? There are things in the world about us, chapters in the ecclesias-

tical history of a not very remote past, moods and inclinations in our own souls, which make one prone to believe that somehow God does not care. Every heart that struggles has felt that difficulty. Why should evil be permitted to range so triumphantly? Has not Christ come into the world and set up a Church to hold human wickedness in check? We cannot answer that question entirely to our satisfaction. There would be little merit in our faith, if we could. *Though He slay me, yet will I believe in Him!* Though He seem to sleep, yet will love tell me that He is awake and understands.

A partial answer to the riddle may be discovered in a profound saying of St. Augustine's. Speaking of this very problem, which he seems to have felt as keenly as any thinker of our time, he says: God judged it better to bring good out of evil, than to suffer no evil to exist at all. *Melius enim judicavit de malis bene facere quam mala nulla esse permittere.* A true solution lurks in that direction; but it needs living faith to find it. Behind this eternal conflict, that dizzies and appalls the more one thinks of it, there beats a Heart of Wisdom that will one day set the crooked straight. God is not baffled. Absolute Goodness will not be cheated of the realization of its plan. He has made us free; He leaves us so. The triumph of the ultimate harmony will be but the more entrancing, when the true chord shall have been reached, though a tumult of contrarious notes seemed for a while to shake the bars so forebodingly.

Sorrow is hard to bear, and doubt is slow to clear,
Each sufferer says his say, his scheme of the weal and woe;
But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear;
The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know.

'Tis we musicians know! Faith teaches the dullest of us how to build up cathedrals of psalmody out of the discordant cries of a world always in rebellion against God. The Word has not become Flesh in vain. We renew that act of unshaken trust each time that we hear Mass devoutly. Like the Angels of the Sacrifice we, too, are exhorted to *make melody in the heart,* to sing psalms in unison. Each day's round of solemn questionings, begotten of the evil within us and without, will furnish the crude stuff for our "unwrinkled song." Even if it takes the shape of such a cry as that of to-day's Introit—*Rouse Thee, why sleepest Thou, O Lord*—it will be sweet in the divine ears. The unseen God of the Mass is still the unseen God of an evil world. He hears us *psallentes in unum.*

Rouse Thee, cast us not off forever: The sense of individual abandonment is one of the most terrible trials of the inner life. More are wrecked—more, at any rate, make such an end as looks to us like shipwreck—on that rock than is commonly supposed. So many begin well; so few end well! Oh, if one could write those secret histories! It was this temptation that sifted them. They thought God asleep. The Psalmist felt it; Israel often felt it, when the heel of the oppressor was upon his neck;

Our Lord felt it; it was the last drop of bitterness in the cup of His Passion; He drank it; and it killed Him. *My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* Some men can stand being isolated from their fellows; but who can endure to think that he is isolated from God? Yet some of the most human of the saints had to pass through this experience; St. Catherine of Siena, haunted by impure images, could only express her gratitude, when deliverance came, by the reproachful cry: *Where wert Thou, Lord?* St. Teresa's trial is too well known to be insisted on; and a saint, as kindly and as innocently worldly-wise as Francis de Sales, sounded, during a grave crisis in his career, all the anticipated despairs of conscious reprobation. What instrument of safety shall we find in that engulfing sea of doubt? God has His own times and seasons; but love will find its way to Him even out of the horrors of the Pit. Meanwhile there is the daily refuge of the Holy Eucharist. *There can be no living death when that Bread of Life Everlasting is taken and eaten worthily.*

Our belly hath cleaved to the ground: The body has a share in the soul's afflictions. It is in virtue of one mysteriously dynamic principle of consciousness that I—matter and soul and spirit—am truly I. If the potentialities of all beatitude, those of sense as well as those of intellect, are in each child of Adam, no matter how degraded he may be by sins of race, or kindred, or personal commission, the potentialities of all suffering are in him

likewise. The soul which has tasted of the bitterness of despair will drench its outer vesture with the overflowing chalice of its grief. There are few bodily tortures comparable to the indefinable slow aches of a heart which has become an outcast from its God. Then indeed is the mere natural manhood in us ready to grovel, when the soul has cast its lamp into the dust. Custom, the imperious rule of habit, social convention, regard for human friendship —these things may save us from grosser excesses when we deem that God has withdrawn Himself, and that we sit solitary and alone; but what shall save us within? *Nothing but the outer ordinances of the Church.* Oh, Our Blessed Lord devised well—*He knew what was in man*—when He invented the sacraments for our healing! Let us never grow remiss in our treatment of them. They are the true antidotes against despair. Let them seem never so mechanical to our weariness of spirit, still shall we go on perseveringly in their use. Not month by month, but week by week, and oftener, according to our soul's need, let us reach out and hold hard by Him Whose virtue goes out to us in each one of them, and Who gives us Himself, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, in the Communion of His Mass. So shall we not cleave forever to the ground; our feet shall not stick fast in the mire. In a good Communion there is always sure standing. *That will help us and set us free.*

O God, we have heard with our ears: Our fathers have rehearsed to us: What an inspiring literature has grown

up about the Blessed Eucharist! What a record it is of the sweetest and truest type of religion to rely on in every age! It is by the Communion of the Mass that we make Divinity our own. We appropriate It. God all but empties Himself—empties Himself twice over, as Christ and as Bread—in His awful yearning to make us one with Himself. Read often the lives of those saints who were especially devout to the Mass. Make yourself familiar with the attitude of the early Church towards the Real Presence. How proud our fathers were of that privilege! How jealously they guarded it from profanation! Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Ignatius—do these names mean anything to us? And in later times, how inspiringly did the Angel of the Schools write for our comfort! Make frequent use of his *Office of the Blessed Sacrament* when assisting at Mass. After the Missal prayers there is nothing like it, even in the most eloquent of the ancient liturgies. *O God we have heard with our ears: Our Fathers have rehearsed unto us!*

Sunday in Quinquagesima

Introit: Ps. xxx, 3-4 and 1-2.
Epistle: 1 Cor. xiii, 1-13.
Gospel: S. Luke xviii, 31-43.

Introitus: Esto mihi in Deum protectorem, et in locum refugii, ut salvum me facias: Quoniam firmamentum meum et refugium meum es Tu: et propter nomen tuum dux mihi eris, et enutries me.

In Te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum: in justitia tua libera me, et eripe me.

The Entrance Versicle: *Be Thou to me for a protecting God, and as a citadel of refuge to save me: For my sure defence and place of retreat art Thou: Yea, for Thy Name's sake Thou shalt be my Captain, and shalt feed me.*

In Thee, O Lord, have I put my trust, let me not be confounded forever: In Thy righteousness deliver me, and take me away.

BE Thou to me for a protecting God: The burden enunciated by Job in his answer to Eliphaz the Temanite, finds a daily echo in many a faithful heart. *The life of man on earth is a warfare*, a warfare of the most depress-

ing kind; for we must fight like the hireling, and feel all the while that we have no more knowledge of the real scope and plan of the campaign than the mercenary has. The element of enthusiasm, without which men seldom struggle for long, is lacking in too many of us. It is a weary business, we say; and we wish it were over. It is in such moods that our most insidious danger lies. To know that we do not stand alone, to realize that God is with us, and over us like a protecting fastness, is everything at such moments. Ask Our Blessed Lord, when you speak to Him in the Communion to-day, to fix that rallying cry in your memory. It will give energy to your arm when further effort seems impossible or vain. *Be Thou to me for a protecting God!*

St. Paul says that our wrestling is not with flesh and blood; the hosts of the fallen spirits are arrayed against us for our further trial. In this warfare, too, is God *a protecting God.* He will not suffer us to be tested above our powers. Let that truth be *our citadel of refuge* when the sense of defeat pours in like a panic fear over all the outer ramparts of the soul. What forces seem to be marshalled against us! How past and present combine in a league of conquest! Native temperament, inherited disposition, acquired habits, education, environment, opportunity—what an appalling alliance they all make at certain pivotal moments of our lives! But even in such dire case we are not alone. The hidden God of the altar is stronger than all these separate agencies and

instruments of evil. A single Mass would be enough to dispeople hell, could Our Blessed Lord but find good will there. Why should we fear? Until the judgment hour is our God for *a protecting God* unto the least spiritual of us.

My sure defence and place of retreat art Thou: There are as many ways of delivering souls from peril as there are varieties of temperament among the sons of men. Our Lord alone, Who knows each separate heart and Who speaks to it by its own secret name, can tell us how manifold are the mercies to which He has not pledged Himself, but which He gives us nevertheless in bewildering measure, because, being God, He cannot but be good, and being man He cannot but love the fallen nature He labored so hard to redeem. And yet, manifold and mysterious as are these uncovenanted ways of His, sure as are these uncharted places of retreat, how can they ever compare with this most firm defence of all, the citadel of refuge He has provided for us in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood? Merely to be present at a Mass, even if we cannot communicate, turns the most cowardly of us into men. How insignificant, how fleeting will the ordinary trials of the day appear, if studied beforehand from the eminence of Calvary! And even if there be an extreme cross to be undergone, as there may be in the lives of the most shielded of us, we shall get strength to bear it, if we go to meet it from that Hill of Conquest. Think of the Parish Church in that light. It is a citadel of refuge, a

place of retreat each morning of your life, because God is revealed unto you as a protecting God upon its altar. Begin the day's struggle, if you can, by renewing your fortitude there. *You shall go forward from strength to strength!*

For Thy Name's sake Thou shalt be my Captain: The propensity to partizanship is not radically wrong in human nature. Whether we will or no we drift into schools; we split up into factions; we range ourselves under leaders. To belong to no following may in certain rare instances be a sign of breadth, but for the generality of men it betrays petty egoism and colorlessness. In literature, in art, in speculative philosophy, in ethics, in economics, in the sphere of politics, we unconsciously but inevitably select our man. Even in the more delicate and personal concerns of the spirit we have our preferences, and lean rather to this father confessor than to that, just as we feel drawn to one saint and remain cold and unresponsive to the appeal of another. God made us so in the beginning. These varieties of temperament are part of the beauty of that Temple of His on earth, which is built up of sanctified human character, touched with enthusiasm for Our Lord's ideals. And yet we may make mistakes in leadership. Have we not done so in the past? *One is our Master, even Christ.* Let us study Him and make Him our guide. In every one of the departments of knowledge we have named there is room for His teaching and we shall be in constant danger of going astray,

if we close our ears to His sayings. We talk glibly of the delimitations of reason and faith, and there is a sense in which it is right to insist upon them. He is an inept philosopher who would consent to blur the difficultly achieved distinctions of things. But to delimit is not to ignore. In all the wrestlings that the mind or heart of the true Catholic may have to carry on in the various fields of science or of human life, Christ Our Lord is still his Leader. Is it not perverse in one to kneel reverently through the morning Mass, and then go out to his tasks among his non-Catholic fellow-men and use words and phrases, and even admit notions into his mind which equivalently deny that leadership? *Dux mihi eris et enutries me!* In every avenue of thought and feeling, in every struggle of the conscience, in every problem of the intellect or heart, He is still our Captain and He nourishes us with His truth as unsparingly as He has given us of His own Body and Blood! *Yea, for His Name's sake, in the power of which we have been baptized into Him and made strong, He will be our Captain, He will feed us always.*

The First Sunday in Lent

Introit: Ps. xc, 15, 16 and 1.
Epistle: 2 Cor. vi, 1-10.
Gospel: S. Matt. iv, 11.

Introitus: Invocabit me, et ego exaudiam eum: eripiam eum, et glorificabo eum: longitudine dierum adimplebo eum.

Qui habitat in adjutorio Altissimi: in protectione Dei cœli commorabitur.

The Entrance Versicle: *He shall call upon Me, and I will hearken to him: I will deliver him, and bring him to honor: With length of days will I satisfy him.*

Whoso dwelleth under the help of the Most High shall abide under the shelter of the God of heaven.

HE shall call upon Me, and I will hearken to him: It is not an easy thing to keep Lent religiously. Fasting, and prayer, and steadfast retirement from the habitual centres of the world's recreation are not pleasant things to the spirit. When the body is cheated of its joy the lower soul grows querulous. This is the time to lift up our cry. We need Our Lord's help. We cannot hope to abide in the desert with the memory of our sins for company, if He is not with us. He has pledged Him-

self to hear us, if we invoke Him in all seriousness in the Sacrament of Penance, and seal our change of heart by a worthy Communion. Though the Lenten season is commonly understood to be a time of preparation for our great Passover, and though the Introits and other scriptural extracts of all the Masses of these coming weeks plead with an ever increasing explicitness for sincerity in performing our Easter duty, the best preparation of all is still to be present at the Holy Sacrifice every day, and to communicate as often as the pastors of our souls think well for us. This is the right way to call upon the Lord, to beseech the shelter of El'yon and find comfort under the shadow of Shaddai, the Mighty One.

He shall call upon Me, and I will hearken to him: The most stoical have their secret hours of helplessness. No matter how strong a face they bear before the world, there are moments when the inner countenance of the soul is distorted with pain and the heart is fain to make confession of its weakness. Pride holds it back, and lays a finger on the lips that are about to open. And in some sense that kind of pride is not wholly wrong. What do we gain by leaning upon the average man? We lose little by keeping our griefs to ourselves so far as he is concerned; but we lose much—oh, more than we can ever make good again, either here or in heaven!—if we withhold them from God. It is not cowardice to look for consolation from that source. He has made us for Himself. We are none of us men altogether, when He is in ques-

tion. He has called Himself Our Father, and He wishes us to be His children. Indeed, He is both Father and Mother in one, as many an Old Testament metaphor reminds us. Has He not made it an indispensable condition for entrance into that new relationship between the world and Himself, which He has established in Christ, that we should become, not children merely, but little children most of all? We do well, therefore, *to call upon Him*, we do well to rehearse these complaining tales of woe which seem so contemptible to the self-reliant, but which are not contemptible to Him, seeing that He sends them, or permits them, for the sake of *an exceeding weight of glory which shall one day be revealed in us.* Call upon Him, therefore, in prayer; call upon Him in the secret closet of the confessional, so far as you may do so in prudence—for many become foolishly garrulous in that little house of grief, and contract habits of self-pity there that are not quite bracing to the soul—call upon Him daily as the Church does during the Mass. Learn to recite that liturgical epilogue to the Our Father, which is found in the Roman Missal: *Deliver us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, from all ills, past, present and to come; . . . in Thy loving kindness grant us peace in these our days, that, through the help of Thy mercy, we may be always free from sin, and careless in the face of every trouble.* Careless in the face of every trouble! *Securi!* We do not ask to be altogether free from perturbation. Trials must come, walk we never so warily. But when they do arrive, we shall not be over-anxious. *We shall*

call upon the Lord in Mass time, and He will hearken unto us!

I will deliver him and bring him to honor: St. Paul reminds us that *we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.* Jehovah revealed Himself to man in the beginning, and Adam walked for a while in that light and was perfect. Then he fell away. The pattern of divine righteousness was but dimly apprehended after that until the old error was set straight, and the children of earth were allowed once more to gaze upon the ancient splendor, as it spoke to their hearts through the human eyes of Christ. *We beheld His glory,* is St. John's way of putting it, *full of grace and truth.* The whole purpose of the religious life in every age of the world has been to realize Godhead in the soul and conscience of the individual man. The divine glory is revealed for that end. The sight of it, whether by reason or faith, and in the measure of our apprehension always, transforms us and sets us free. That is why St. Paul contrasts the privileges of believers with the servitude of those who still move about *with a veil upon their hearts. We all,* says the Apostle, *with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image from glory to glory, as it were, by the Spirit of the Lord.* It is the Holy Ghost Who works that alteration in us; and it is the Sacramental system, and the Eucharist of the morning Sacrifice pre-eminently, that constitutes His great covenanted medium of sanctification. It is by this means,

and by the Mass most sweetly, that we are delivered from our small servitudes day by day, *and brought unto honor.* We are made glorious even here and now. Yet some of us still wear a kind of veil upon the heart. We do not realize how wonderful is the ministration of grace we neglect by remaining away from the Lord's Table.

With length of days will I satisfy him: The fulness of a good life is measured by merit. It is the sign of the weight of glory we carry with us that marks us out as foolishly young or wisely old in Our Lord's Kingdom. The majority of us are neither young nor old, but of a perversely Laodicean mediocrity. Yet we all aspire to a venerable old age, which is not that of long time, but which is sharply contrasted, rather, with the brevity of the years of the wicked—the folk *who say in their hearts there is no God!* A true Catholic lives in holy thoughts and deeds and good intentions, and so grows up to his superabundant wisdom in Christ. Here is a kind of computation by which babes and sucklings are accounted old, and grey-beards mere children in ripeness of character. It is Our Lord alone Who satisfies us. It is by His fulness, the *pleroma* that we receive in the Holy Communion, that our days grow long upon the earth, and we ourselves come at last to possess the land wherein our eyes shall behold Him in His beauty, near, as the parish altar is near, and yet far off as the central core of Light Inaccessible whose beams shall be at once our shelter and our glory in heaven.

The Second Sunday in Lent

INTROIT: Ps. xxiv, 6 (partim) and 1-2.
EPISTLE: 1 Thess. iv, 1-17.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. xvii, 1-9.

Introitus: Reminiscere miserationum tuarum, Domine, et misericordiæ tuæ, quæ a sæculo sunt: ne unquam dominentur nobis inimici nostri: libera nos, Deus Israel, ex omnibus angustiis nostris.

Ad te, Domine, levavi animam meam: Deus meus, in te confido, non erubescam.

The Entrance Versicle: *Remember Thy compassions, O Lord, and Thy mercy, which are from of old: Suffer not at any time our foes to lord it over us: Deliver us, O God of Israel, from all our perplexities.*

Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: My God, in Thee do I trust: I shall not be ashamed.

REMEMBER Thy compassions, O Lord, and Thy mercies which are from of old: The Incarnation of the Word is God's greatest and most ancient mercy. He seems to have thought of that first and last, when gazing on the Image of Himself, which is His Son. Christ is Alpha and Omega. Through Him does God become All

in All. The particular providences of our own individual life are the compassions that are rooted in that primal act of tenderness, that divine *Hesed*, or loving-piety, as the Psalmist calls it. *These compassions are from of old, though they happen to us here and now.* God cannot change. Because He loved us in the beginning He will love us to the end. It is the Apostle's favorite argument. Having given us His Son, He will give us all things with Him. This is why the Church makes use of David's sweet reproach in to-day's Introit. We are face to face with our lower selves now. We are in the desert with beasts for company; and the sight of our actual past sins with the sense of our rooted inclinations towards evil impels us to lift this pathetic cry: *Remember Thy compassions, O Lord, and Thy mercies which are from of old!*

The instinct to remind one of past kindnesses, with the hope of stirring anew in him the springs of pity, is one of the strongest tendencies of our nature. With the noble and the single-hearted it seldom fails to succeed. God, Who is all-noble, because He is all-wise and all-good, will not be unmoved when such a prayer rises to Him out of the voluntary wilderness of the soul into which we have withdrawn for a space in order to be alone with Him. Be insistent, therefore, in your rehearsals. Not only for mankind in general, but for me in particular, has He had regard unceasingly. Will not the conscience name these separate compassions, and count them

one by one, if it can bring itself to be sincere? The law of cause and effect will not explain everything in a man's life. If a sparrow falls to the ground Our Father notices it. Our Blessed Lord, Who re-stated that truth for us, when He taught us how to pray, added, that each follower of His was worth more than many sparrows. I can appeal, therefore, to my individual experiences. The recital of them may not be stimulating to my neighbor; but they are all the world to me; and—it is no paradox to say it—they are all the world to God likewise. He sees His Son's three and thirty years of toil in the most insignificant of us. Therefore, I have just that value in His divinely-blinded eyes. I am worth the passion and death of Christ to Him. What a dignity each particular escape, each isolated providence, acquires when viewed in that light! Remind Him, therefore, of them all. Be as specific as you will, He can never weary of the tale of your recognizances. They are the pledges of His love; and it is love's way always, that custom can never stale the infinite variety of its gratitude. The divine Lover will listen and understand. He will be secretly glad.

One could go through this intimate recital at any time. A quiet hour and a place for solitude are all that is required. Why do we insist on such considerations, therefore, at Mass time? Surely, the answer is obvious. In the Mass Our Lord makes Himself our own. He becomes One with us, when we receive Him worthily; and so this

last particular favor is our best Reminder to the Father of those unfailing mercies which began long ago in an unpeopled heaven, and which will be continued to usward here amid the perplexities of earth, and afterwards, amid the desolation of purgatory, until they be swallowed up in the exceeding joy of possession in a heaven made glad with the full number of the elect. As you kneel before the Holy Table, waiting with parted lips and hungry heart to have Him come to you once more, you can say, without any disquieting sense of disproportion, reckoning from this intimate hour of knowledge and delight, that all past graces and favors, all particular deliverances in your life, are renewed once more. His compassions are redintegrated. His mercy reaches from end to end; and though you be but an atom in a pulsing universe of redeemed souls, His human Heart and yours make a veritable All-in-All. Righteousness and loving-kindness have kissed each other. Oh, if that moment of inter-possession could only be prolonged! Thenceforth it would be neither thou nor He; all division would be swallowed up in the newer fulness of the Over-God—God's love gratified by your surrender, your littleness made great by His exceeding condescension; your soul would be lifted up to the Jehovah of your trust, and in spite of all your past sins there would be no vestige of shame.

Deliver us, O God of Israel, from all our perplexities: That feeling of intimate relationship, which made the

devout Israelite think of Jehovah as his own racial God, Who delivered him and the nation from all perplexity, and Who ruled the outer world of the *Goim* for the sake of the Elect, belongs in a much more saving and justifiable sense to the conscientious Catholic. All the lessons of his creed enforce that magnificently intolerant view. The heirship to the promises made to Abraham is dependent upon faith in Our Lord, and not upon family trees. That is the kinship that saves. We are surely of the King's household; we are of His root and branch —blood of His Blood, sacrament for sacrament. We were begotten openly and honorably of His Church. We call her our Holy Mother. We inherit our royalty through sonship in her. All others stand without. We do not say that they are not saved—God forbid!—but they are not in all respects as those who hold to visible communion with that society, which is not the least of Our Lord's mercies to a blundering world. We Catholics constitute the true Israel; and Christ, Who is Israel's King, is Our God. He delivers us from all perplexity, if we hold fast by the ways of His Church. She will not solve all our intellectual problems; she was not instituted for that; but she will disentangle the perplexities that arise from our native blindness and forgetfulness of heart. That is her most merciful mission, and, for us, it is her most important. She keeps us in touch with Christ. The quiet of mind that comes of childlike trust is ensured to all those who believe her ways to be the ways of God. Her sacraments, her prayers, her point

of view as revealed in tradition and interpreted for us authoritatively by her pastors—these are the instruments by which most of our anxieties are allayed. Half our difficulties arise from our own selfish aloofness. The more we identify ourselves with her living teaching, even when it seems to our one-sided knowledge to be at variance with her pronouncements and instincts in the past, the more infallibly shall we be identified in heart and soul and mind with that God of Israel Who will not permit our foes at any time to lord it over us. *O my God, in Thee do I trust, I shall not be ashamed!*

The Third Sunday in Lent

Introit: Ps. xxiv, 15, 16 and 1.
Epistle: Ephes. v, 1-9.
Gospel: S. Luke xi, 14-29.

Introitus: Oculi mei semper ad Dominum, quia ipse evellet de laqueo pedes meos: respice in me, et miserere mei, quoniam unicus et pauper sum ego.

Ad te, Domine, levavi animam meam: Deus meus, in te confido, non erubescam.

The Entrance Versicle: *Mine eyes are ever looking unto the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net: Turn Thee unto me and have pity upon me, for I am without friends and poor.*

Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: O my God, in Thee do I put my trust, I shall not be ashamed.

MINE eyes are ever looking unto the Lord: One vital aspect of religion, as it is enforced in both dispensations, is, that the eyes of the Lord are forever fixed upon the soul. He sees us always. That is a great truth; and the thought of it is like a lamp to the careful conscience; but it needs to be counter-illumined

by this other consideration, or we shall go hopelessly astray amid the vain shadows of Jansenism. If we would rightly understand the sum of our duties towards God, we must not merely think of Him as looking upon us, we must have our own eyes turned towards Him day and night. We must wait upon Him in every place and at every hour. *Mine eyes are unto Yahveh!* That must be the burden of our life's cry. So accustomed was the general mind of Israel to think of God in this way, that at one time in the nation's history princes and priests were proud to bear the name in which this feeling was enshrined. There are at least six characters in the Old Testament records called Elioenai—*Unto Yahveh are mine eyes.* Do names like that not speak? Do they not quicken our trust? Much of the pathos of the psalms is due to this abiding sense of confidence. *Expectans, expectavi!* I have waited upon the Lord, and He hath not failed me.

In an age like our own, too much occupied with the rigorous necessity of things, too much taken up, in a word, with the discovery of law both in the material universe and in the more human world of history and economics, it is not easy for the believer habitually to cultivate this childish regard towards Him in Whom we live and move and have our being; yet, if we neglect it, the better and sweeter—perhaps the more saving—part of our religion dies. The secret of growth, the saints remind us, lies in thinking always of the divine presence.

We acquire a habit of remembrance which becomes in time a sort of second nature. We attain to Christ's stature. Not all reach that difficult result by the same spiritual process. We are of many tastes and temperaments, and of various capacity, even in the Kingdom of Heaven. What draws my neighbor may not make so powerful an appeal to me. We ought not to be disturbed at this apparent insensibility. Why should I grieve that I am still I, if only I be anxious to find my Lord? Here is a method proposed to us by the Church, who is the best of teachers; and we shall do well to adapt it to our individual needs; for it has the charm of definiteness and particularity, while losing none of that breadth that every religious lesson must have, if it is to inspire men at all. We are all seekers in some direction or other. Our eyes are ever turned hungrily to discover the untold want that we have missed in life up to this. "Here it is close at hand," says Our Mother the Church in this morning's Introit, *unto the Yahveh of the Mass be thine eyes each day!* To make painful little sacrifices in preparation over night in order to buy our right to be present at this Great Sacrifice in the morning, to resolve never to be cheated of that daily blessing, to have a fixed hour and an ordered time for rising, that we may the more infallibly secure it, to look upon that sacred function as holding up to us behind the sacramental veils One Whom our human eyes are hungry to see—oh, this surely is to be loyally expectant towards Jehovah, this is to be an Elioenai in spite of the Babylonish Cap-

tivity to sense that detains Faith in a far country and hides from it the one open Face of its dreams! In the old days, while Israel waited amid its types and shadows for the realities that were to come, the Shew Bread, which was renewed each Sabbath morning in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle, was called the Bread of the Face, or the Bread of the Presence; but in the Mass, where Israel waits no longer, but enjoys, we have the Holier Offering, renewed not weekly, but hourly and momentarily in a chain of religious offices all round the world, and the Presence that sanctifies that is the Face of the Christ Who is the Desired of Mankind. The eyes of the good Catholic are ever to Him. *Elioenai, Elioenai!*

> Each looks upon each,
> Up grows a thought without speech!

He shall pluck my feet out of the net: That prudence should be styled a cardinal virtue, a virtue, that is, on which so much of the more specific wisdom of life must hinge, implies that even for the wisest of us the world will be full of entanglements. Snares for the hands and snares for the feet; snares for the heart and snares for the mind! We are entrapped in a hundred unperceived ways; for the devil is a rare hunter of souls, and he has studied all our paths and goings. We are exceedingly foolish until we learn the counter craft of Christ, and arm ourselves with the Sacraments. Even if the devil were our sole adversary, life would be problematic enough; but we have our friends to reckon with,

we have our many-sided selves and the great outlying world with its cross-enthusiasms and selfish ambitions to encounter. We could not cut a straight road through such a thicket of anti-motives, even if we would. None of us shall go altogether straight unless the word of Jehovah be as a lamp to our feet. When we are young we affect to laugh at destiny. We are the arbiters of our fates, because we are free and strong. We pretend to fashion our future, and fare whither we will. But when we are old, that is to say, when we have become wise in faith, Another leads us, and compels us to go whither we would not. So are our feet plucked out of the net at last. Our Lord saves us by the mingled sense of our own errors and by trust in the ordinances of His Church; He saves us by the teaching of faithful pastors, by the prayers and meritorious services of His saints, by our own quickened consciences stirred by His grace, by His Sacraments and all the other devices of His love, and most of all, by His wonderful and never-failing Mass, which works more changes in human destiny than any other moral force on earth, and works them incalculably and surely, because its operations are so hidden, so human, so unforeseen. Oh, learn to think reverently of the Mass as a means of deliverance from the unnumbered perplexities of life! Hope lies there for the discerning always.

I am without friends and poor: There are some difficulties which must be faced alone—the difficulties that

meet one in middle life, chiefly. Whether they happen to us through faults of temperament or of character, we often find ourselves a prey to certain states of heart which we can never hope to explain, though we talk about them never so candidly to our Confessors, and endeavor to unbosom them to a tried and understanding friend. Unless we have acquired the art of revealing these moods in secret to Our Lord in Holy Communion, we are hopelessly desolate and poor. But with His word to comfort us, how rich in counsel we become, how resourceful in friendship, and how strong! *Elioenai, Elioenai!* The eyes of our heart go ever Mass-ward! *Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: O my God, in Thee do I put my trust daily: I shall not be ashamed.*

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

INTROIT: Is. lxvi, 10-11, and Ps. cxxi, 1.
EPISTLE: Gal. iv, 22-31.
GOSPEL: S. John vi, 1-15.

Introitus: Lætare Jerusalem, et conventum facite, omnes qui diligitis eam: gaudete cum lætitia, qui in tristitia fuistis: ut exsultetis, et satiemini ab uberibus consolationis vestræ.

Lætatus sum in his quæ dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus.

The Entrance Versicle: *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and come together, all ye that love her: Share ye in her joy, all ye that have mourned: that ye may revel, and be filled with the breasts that are your consolation.*

I was glad when it was announced to me: We will go into the House of the Lord.

REJOICE ye with Jerusalem: Lætare Sunday, as today is often called by those who are familiar with the liturgy of the modern Church, marks a broad division of the penitential season. Thought and action alike will move rapidly during the next three weeks. If we have used our Lent well, redeeming by prayer the days that

seemed evil, we shall be filled with a kind of austere joy this morning at the prospect of what is still before us. By one of those paradoxes, which only the just realize, because it is the just alone who are brave enough to live up to them, we are reminded that in Our Lord's Kingdom on earth the way to gladness is often through much tribulation and chiefly through self-imposed pain. How few learn that lesson! The Catholic who has tried to adjust the claims of the Church with those of the world during this strenuous period, who has stinted himself in no wise of his accustomed pleasures, who has justified the theatre to himself on the plea of its educational value, and the ball-room or banquet-hall on the need of satisfying the just social claims of his neighbor, is not likely to understand his Mother's message on Lætare Sunday. How can he come together with, and share in the joy of, all those that love her, when he has not made common cause with those that have mourned?

Rejoice ye with Jerusalem: How numerous we Catholics are as a body in many of the more crowded cities of the New World! But does our devotion to the meagre Lenten service, that is put before us as a substitute for the old canonical fasts at this time, make any appreciable difference in the outer life of the communities in which we live? *We have not mourned with Sion, we have not come together with her.* No wonder that the prophet's invitation to share in the gladness of Lent bewilders us a bit to-day!

Share ye in her joy, all ye that have mourned: There must be a touch of method in every conscientious life. If we are to walk according to rule, how shall we avoid the semblance of being mechanical? Our real existence is lived apart with Christ, communing with Him from day to day at our Mother's knee. It is from her that we learn what grave manly joy lurks in all sincere Catholic penance. The saints that have the most winning laugh are those that have sorrowed most.

That ye may revel, and be filled with the breasts that are your consolation: Why does this symbol of the nursing mother meet us at every stage of revelation? It is as familiar to the writers of the New Testament as it is to the prophets of the Old. It lurks as an afterpicture behind Our Lord's first lesson on the need of Baptism; it is implied in His injunction to become as little children for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake. One answer is that no metaphor can exhaust the riches of God's loving-kindness, and Jehovah is more than a Father. All joy is a quickener; and supernatural joy brings with it an increase of divine life in the heart. It sets the life of the soul, grown querulous and petulant with the vanity of existence, close to the breasts that never fail its various and contradictory desires. Most of us are too old for all our pride of youth, and our pretentious conceit of wisdom. That figure of the infant wantoning upon its mother's bosom humbles and abases us, and yet soothes, even while it humbles. We shall find so much

in God, if we only obey the primal hunger that accounts for our unrest. Everything is in Him—the happiness we seek for in friends, in home, in kindred, in reputation, in success, in pure and unselfish love—whatsoever sweetens the springs of life, or makes it good for us merely to be, we shall taste it all some day, if only we cling to Him now in conscience, and drink eagerly of the good things provided for us in the Sacraments of the Church. Those who stand without the household of the faith often ask if Catholics have peace, and sometimes we who dwell within, occupied as we are with the petty vexations and all-too selfish sorrows of our own morbid personalities, are prone to answer fretfully, that peace is for the after-world and not for this. But on all the deeper problems that affect human conduct, and on that abiding sense of guilt that festers like an old sore about the heart, we have a more consoling tale to tell. The figure of the nursing mother applies to the Church of our Baptism with a force and an appositeness that no other institution on earth can claim. What is it that she can do for us, and has not done? In infancy, in youth, in self-contained manhood, in the loneliness of our declining years, is she anything but the Comfortress of the babe within us? In one sense we are sucklings always, and there is a something in the soul that cries unceasingly for the breasts that are our consolation. It is the inner child-self that does not keep pace with our outer life as men see it. God knows of that unequal growth; and He has spoken to us in a hundred parables to console us for the

disparity. One of the greatest of our Mother's consolations is this daily solace of the Mass. Carry your wants thither, and be as an "infant crying in the night." She will fill you with the milk of her doctrine and with the transmitted life of that Spouse through Whom she brought you forth in Baptism, and for Whose sake she longs to see you grow in wisdom and age and grace, until the countenance of the soul within you wear the perfect likeness which is her daily joy.

Sunday in Passion Week

INTROIT: Ps. xlii, 1-3.
EPISTLE: Hebr. ix, 11-16.
GOSPEL: S. John viii, 46-59.

Introitus: Judica me, Deus, et discerne causam meam de gente non sancta: ab homine iniquo et doloso eripe me: quia tu es Deus meus, et Fortitudo mea.

Emitte, lucem tuam, et veritatem tuam: ipsa me deduxerunt, et adduxerunt in montem sanctum tuum, et in tabernacula tua.

The Entrance Versicle: *Judge me, O God, and decide my cause against an ungodly nation: From the unjust and deceitful man deliver me: For Thou art my God and my Strength.*

Send forth Thy light and Thy truth: They have led me, yea, they have brought me up into Thy Holy Mountain, and into Thy Tabernacles.

JUDGE me, O God, and decide my cause: Those are awful words, and one may well hesitate to apply them to one's own case. However just our plea may be according to human reckoning, we cannot but feel that in

God's eyes we have little to go upon. The angels themselves are hardly clean in the light of the divine countenance. How should I look for favor, therefore? No; it is neither of myself nor for myself, that I venture to make such an appeal. What the priest does daily at the foot of the altar, that do I do now in the name of the Church, as the thought of the Passion rises austerely before me. It is for the Man Christ I plead; it is for the Church who is His Other, His mystical and testamentary Self, that I venture to utter such words. *Judge Him, O God, and decide His cause; judge His holy Church: her plea is just. In the measure in which I am a true child of hers, made one with Her Spouse in the grace of the Sacraments, in that measure, and in that measure only, may I, without fear, expect to be judged by Thee.*

Against an ungodly nation: It is not from the scoffer and the unbeliever alone that the Church prays to be delivered. It is against an ungodly, an undutiful people, the children that fail in kindness, the sons that are in rebellion against light and truth, that she makes her daily appeal. Am I of that inhuman number? *If mine enemy had done this, I might have borne it; but thou that didst sit at my table!* The Ahitophel, against whom this prayer is put into the mouth of the psalmist, is one of a type that God's kingdom has to deal with in every age. The wisdom that is not from on high will come to ruin in the end. Balaam, Saul, Ahitophel, Ju-

das, the heresiarchs and schismatics of the new dispensation, these are God's worst enemies. *Be not in strife with the House of David,* says the Talmud, *and break not off from its rule.* There are Catholics who permit themselves foolish liberties both in private speech and in public criticism. They enter into a sort of alliance with the world, and array themselves against what they are pleased to term certain tendencies in ecclesiasticism. They take up questionable views in philosophy, or they identify themselves with a disintegrating creed in politics; and so find themselves out of harmony with the great body of the faithful. Let us be on our guard against that unnatural spirit of revolt. Ruin lies that way, and self-destruction. The true children of the Church are never found in the tents of the disaffected. They are not tolerant of abuses; but neither are they caustic in their criticism of them. They would rather practice patience in the face of unseemliness than fail in charity. They are above the miserable ambition of seeming to be shrewd in advance of their time. The cords of Adam are always stronger than the halters of Giloh.

From the unjust and deceitful man deliver me: Can we make that prayer in all sincerity? In presuming to utter the words of it, are we asking to be delivered from ourselves? *From the unjust man—ab homine iniquo,* the man who fails in equity! A large part of the natural law is summed up in the injunction to do as we

would be done by. Is it possible that we who pretend to make much of our Christianity fail in a virtue that even pagans keep? Are all our dealings scrupulously fair? Do we speak the truth always, even when it costs us some inconvenience to be straightforward? Why does one hear so many gibes flung by the ribald at a certain type of religious soul? Is it not because there are people who affect to follow carefully in Our Lord's footsteps, and who yet give themselves a large license in the minor veracities of intercourse with their kind? Let us not juggle with our consciences in so fundamental a matter. Is it not written that *liars shall not possess the kingdom of God?* Every time that we hear a priest begin the forty-second psalm at the foot of the altar, we ought to feel our hearts rebuked for all the petty deceits of our everyday life. *From the unjust and deceitful man, from myself, O Lord, deliver me!*

Send forth Thy Light and Thy Truth: Israel never forgot that earlier loving-kindness which comforted the leaders of his people with a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. In every trial that befell him in his long after-progress, his heart turned wistfully back to that magnificent interposition. Though he walked in the valley of the shadow of death, he feared no evil; the Light and the Truth that had shone upon his fathers of old, these were the rod and the staff of his consolation; in his heart he was convinced that they were destined one day to reappear; the lines of his children would yet be

cast in pleasant places. How gloriously that dream was realized let all those who believe in the Incarnation, and who see its wonders renewed daily in the Eucharist, say. The Light that enlighteneth every man coming into this world is sent forth from our altars; the Truth which has been declared to us as the Way of Life has led us up into the Holy Mountain, even to *the City which can never be* hid! Oh, if we only realized how central and pivotal an intelligent belief in the Mass is, how much more complete might our lives as Catholics be! We touch all mysteries, we sound all profundities, and, in a sense, we master the knowledge of them, in that most mystical of rites. Past and present and future, the whole history of truth-seeking mankind, is unrolled in that brief morning service, because God's Light and Truth are sent forth there, and we that think upon it wisely are as men comforted by a moving Pillar of Cloud.

Palm Sunday

INTROIT: Ps. xxi, 20-23 and 2.

EPISTLE: Phil. ii, 5-11.

GOSPEL: (To-day the Passion according to St. Matthew is read.)

Introitus: Domine, ne longe facias auxilium tuum a me: ad defensionem meam aspice: libera me de ore leonis, et a cornibus unicornium humilitatem meam.

Deus, Deus meus, respice in me: quare me dereliquisti? Longe a salute mea verba delictorum meorum.

The Entrance Versicle: *O Lord, withdraw not Thy help far off from me: Be ready for mine aid: Save me from the lion's mouth, yea, from the horns of the wild oxen deliver my lowliness.*

My God, my God, turn Thy look upon me: Why hast Thou forsaken me? Far from my Salvation are the words of mine offences.

O LORD, withdraw not Thy help far off from me: The Mass, like the Passion, of which it is at once the Memorial and the equivalent, though painless, Renewal, begets many moods in the heart that meditates upon it. Joy and sorrow, hope and dejection,

the sense of triumph and the feeling of utter defeat —these are but a few of the states of soul that the assiduous and daily thought of it has caused to take root in the mind of the Church. We are on the threshold of Holy Week to-day, and the prospect of the events to be commemorated between now and Holy Saturday fills one as with a consciousness of abandonment. What is God doing, or where has He hidden Himself, we cry, that deeds like the crime of the Sanhedrim, the betrayal of Judas, the vacillation of Pilate, the blows, the buffetings, the scourging, the mockery of Herod and the shameful crucifixion on Calvary, should be permitted on this already too guilty earth? Our Lord sees each dolorous happening in anticipation. The thought of it embitters the triumphant entrance into the Holy City; and He weeps as He rides into its streets.

Catholic theology has, on the whole, but one consentient testimony to offer as to the nature of Our Lord's knowledge. It was both divine and human. But in describing the practical everyday character of its workings, there have been two curiously opposed, though equally devout, schools. The one represents the normal state of Our Lord's soul in its higher faculties as one of beatitude caused by the abiding vision of Godhead. This view, which is also the more popular one, accounts for the human sorrows and fears alluded to in certain passages of the New Testament by suggesting that the inner and secret ecstasy of that unchanging vision was habit-

ually held in check and not allowed to overflow too irresistibly upon the lower faculties of the soul. The opposite school, on the other hand, in spite of various minor disagreements, maintains that there is no satisfying evidence in Scripture or Tradition to support that theory. They hold, therefore, that, while in the ordinary course of events, the human mind of Christ ought habitually to have enjoyed the Beatific Vision, and so been flooded with the joy of divine possession in all its psychic functions, yet, in matter of fact, by the exercise of a kind of perpetual miracle, which was also a perpetual breeder of pain, Our Lord kept that vision in abeyance. That was His daily habit of heart. It was only on rare and extraordinary occasions, as on the Mountain of Transfiguration, or when alone in prayer with His Father, that He suffered Himself to be, as it were, His full and complete Self, as His disciples afterwards knew Him in the Resurrection. This, these theologians go on to say, is the meaning of St. Paul's contention about the great exinanition. Christ emptied Himself of inevitable joy that He might the more effectually become one of ourselves, a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity. Whichever explanation we adopt, and it seems to matter little, so long as we do not refine away the awful reality of Our Lord's sense of dereliction during these days, we can easily understand how pitilessly true are these words of the Introit for Palm Sunday. More than ever before He stands alone now. His great Help, the feeling of His Father's nearness, has *withdrawn far off from Him.*

Divine abandonment is a commoner form of trial than many of us are willing to allow. Without touching upon the difficulties of those who are familiar with the more exalted states of prayer, the plain everyday man or woman, who endeavors to serve God faithfully in the Church of His Son, has frequent moments of solitariness, when the grace of the Sacraments seems to work no change, and the Help by which alone the soul is strong has withdrawn far off. These derelictions happen to one in a variety of ways. On God's side they are, of course, like all the deeper mysteries of His particular providence over us, unanalyzable and incalculable. His Spirit bloweth where He listeth. But on their human and earthly side, they can often be traced to little unnoticed selfishnesses of our own, to wilfulness, to deliberate infidelity in small things. That does not, indeed, exhaust the account of the matter. Just as often, too, they befall one without traceable culpability on his part. We have leaned on things, and they have failed us. Success has eluded us. Friends have turned out to be weak. The love that we thought so constant and true has its ferial days. We, in our turn, are conscious of a kind of deterioration; and over and above it all there is a Force, not ourselves, which seems to knit these separate disappointments together. We feel that we are tangled in a net and there is no escape. *Our Help is removed from us afar off.* Some souls are taught to rely at such moments on certain practical principles of the inner life, which they repeat again and again to themselves by way

of inspiration. *If I do my part, God will not fail me,* they say. *He is not far off from any one of us—Sorrow endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning —Have confidence, I have overcome the world.* These and a hundred other considerations, which might be multiplied out of Scripture, occur to them in their trial. There are minds, it is true, who turn wearily from such gnomic and impersonal comfort. They affect to think cheaply of the souls who are fortified by merely rememberable counsel. They liken them to the type of men who always have an old saw, or popular adage, on hand for guidance amid the perplexities of purely mundane affairs. It is a Man they need, and not an abstraction. *Hominem non habeo!* And we have this *Man.* He is our present Help, near and close and intimate to us, in the Mass, because in the days of His Passion He went as One helpless. He suffered solitary and alone. Open your heart to Him in secret, and He will be ready for your aid. Link your passion to His. Merge your little abandonment in His larger isolation. *Deep calleth unto deep!*

Turn Thy look upon me! His look was as it were hidden and despised. That is the look: the memory and presence of His Passion in the Blessed Eucharist; and it is by such divine regard that we Catholics are saved when things go wrong with us in our lives.

Far from my Salvation are the words of my offences: It is not the mere record of one's private misdeeds, the

catalogue of sins, that justifies. Such confession may be inspired by routine; or it may even be sprung from remorse. *It is far from our Salvation.* The contrition that Our Lord felt for the sins of the race, viewed individually and one by one as an offence against His Father, that is the pattern of our sorrow.

Easter Sunday

INTROIT: Ps. cxxxviii, 18, 5, 6,—1, 2.
EPISTLE: 1 Cor. v, 7-8.
GOSPEL: S. Mark xvi, 1-7.

Introitus: Resurrexi, et adhuc tecum sum, alleluia: posuisti super me manum tuam, alleluia: mirabilis facta est scientia tua. Alleluia, alleluia.

Domine, probasti me, et cognovisti me: Tu cognovisti sessionem meam, et resurrectionem meam.

The Entrance Versicle: *I have risen, and I am still with thee, alleluia: Thou hast laid Thy hand upon me, alleluia: Wonderful hath Thy knowledge become, alleluia, alleluia.*

O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me: Thou hast known my down-sitting and my rising-up.

THE versicles of the Entrance Prayer for Easter Sunday have been taken from one of the sublimest of all the psalms, the *Domine probasti me* of the Vulgate. It is here that the sense of intimate and personal relationship between God and the human soul, which forms the special theme of the great bulk of Scripture, overflows in one of its most characteristic acts of faith and love.

O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me: Thou art aware of my down-sitting and my rising-up: Thou hast understood my thoughts from afar. Such words, of course, have their appositeness in the case of every life that makes its way up to God through trial; but they acquire an unparalleled fulness of meaning, when they are mystically applied, as many of the Fathers delight to apply them, to the circumstances of the Resurrection. *I have risen and I am still with thee, alleluia: Thou hast laid Thy hand upon me, alleluia: Wonderful hath Thy knowledge become!*

I have risen, and I am still with thee: Our Lord's Resurrection was more than a triumph; it was the beginning of a new work. Had it been needed as the mere after-rebuke to the scandal of the Passion, it might have been accomplished in a more striking way; but it seems to have been aimed at something beyond and above all human consolation. In the days of His striving with the argumentative Jews He had said: *My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work;* and though most of His hearers seem to have understood Him well enough, they would not believe. Even His disciples were puzzled. They had heard Him say, half mockingly at the Probatic Pool, after He had revealed Himself as pre-eminently the Man for Whom one sufferer there had waited through eight and thirty years, that the Father would perform a greater wonder through the human instrumentality of His Son, and that many, who were then

listening to Him, would live to marvel at it. It is impossible to read the chapter in St. John's Gospel, in which that prophecy is recorded, without feeling that Our Lord always looked forward to His Resurrection, as the first in a series of spiritual wonders of which the healing of the infirm man by the Sheep Market was to be an historic sign. When the appointed hour was come He rose from the dead *as the Son of Man.* As the Son of Man He contrived a new form of Presence. He dwelt henceforth in His Church as the unseen Head of a mystical Body, of which every faithful soul was to be a living member; He consented to abide in His unworldly kingdom and operate new wonders there through the efficacy of a sacramental system; and, most baffling of all, He fulfilled His promise and made Himself the Food of all who were called to sit down in the House of the Seven Columns, which He, the Wisdom of the Father, had built Himself for a perpetual memorial of the days of His sojourning. His disciples, who had not understood, when these things were darkly foreshadowed in the miracles and discourses by which He was preparing them all along for His greater Marvel, caught the meaning of His own Master Work at the close of the eleventh hour. *He was risen; He was still with them; He was alive in His Church forevermore!*

Thou hast laid Thy hand upon me: These words may be understood as addressed to the Father by Our Lord in His risen Humanity; and in that sense they re-

call one aspect of His sufferings which we too often allow ourselves to ignore. Theories of the Atonement are, of course, something quite apart from the well-defined positions of our Catholic creed on the reality of the Incarnation and human death of the Word; yet Scripture is not without a hint as to what we may well style the lesser divine motives lurking behind the great Mystery. *God so loved the world that He delivered up His only begotten Son for it.* That is the central and unassailable Truth we have to keep in mind when meditating on the Passion of Our Lord; but St. Peter reminds us that *God spared not His own Son.* Does that utterance imply the further notion that there was a kind of dark necessity laid upon the Son of Man to suffer? Faith knows of no other necessity than that of constraining Love. The Passion, like everything else in Our Lord's human career, was a free fact. *Oblatus est quia Ipse voluit.* He was made a victim because He Himself willed it—a Victim, remember. Sin must endure. Between it and God there can be no compounding. He may wipe out the handwriting which is against us; but He will never call it a small matter. Of itself it seems to carry with it the obligation to an eternal weight of pain. That weight was more than our nature could bear; and, therefore, the Word stooped to it and lifted it from our guilty shoulders. In doing that He had to undergo a kind of divine resentment. The hand of His Father was so heavy upon Him that He died beneath the avenging holiness of it.

Thou hast laid Thy hand upon me: We may also understand those words as addressed to the Church on Easter morning. Each child of the old Adam who has won peace through her ministrations has in reality laid a heavy hand upon the Newer Adam who has become her Joy. That is not a cause of sorrow now, but rather a motive for spiritual gladness. Is it not a part of healthy human nature to exult with those who have had to pass through suffering that we might escape ruin? For every weight of sin that was once ours we behold in Him to-day an exceeding weight of glory which shall be revealed in us, when the eternal Easter breaks.

Wonderful hath Thy knowledge become: The Resurrection has not only added to our ideas of God; but it may be said—making all due allowance for the limitations of human language on these high matters—to have introduced a kind of accrete knowledge of our nature into heaven. That is what St. Thomas and the Schoolmen mean when they speak of the increase in accidental glory and the quasi-extension of knowledge which the Second Person seems to acquire in Christ. Of course, in one sense the notion is dangerous and misleading. An imperfection added to an absolute perfection will not make it more perfect. As the formularies of the Athanasian creed remind us, in the Incarnation the two natures were united, but not commingled. There was an interchange of attributions, but not of attributes. The act by which the Word knows *what is in man* is not capable in its es-

sential energy of actual increase. Yet our human understandings will be drawn by their own cords. It is a comfort to us to think, that, if our first father failed through foolishly aspiring to become like God, our Second Father triumphed because He became less than those whom He had longed to re-beget—a worm and no man. In descending to that depth He learned what was in us. It is true, therefore, to say: *Thy knowledge, O God, is become wonderful; and it needed a miracle like the Resurrection to bring it home to our unbelieving hearts! Make us to know what is in Thy Eucharist; so shall we learn in measure to-day what is in Thee!*

The First Sunday after Easter

INTROIT: 1 S. Pet. ii, 2, and Ps. lxxx, 1.
EPISTLE: 1 S. John v, 4-10.
GOSPEL: S. John xx, 19-31.

Introitus: Quasi modo geniti infantes, alleluia: rationabiles, sine dolo lac concupiscite: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Exsultate Deo adjutori nostro: jubilate Deo Jacob.

The Entrance Versicle: *As new-born babes, alleluia: desire ye in reasonableness milk without guile: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

Sing aloud unto God our Helper: Make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob.

AS new-born babes: The dominant note of the liturgy for the past week has been one of joy—joy and concern for the children begotten in Christ. The Church can never forget that she is a mother. The life of the children she has brought forth out of her womb in Baptism is a new life hidden with Christ her Spouse in God. No Catholic stands alone. He belongs to the household of the faith; like the Christ Who begot him, he is the

member of a very Holy Family in a spiritual House of Nazareth. For him there may be brethren, indeed; but in his inner consciousness there are primarily three, and three only, "luminously distinct beings in this world" —himself, his Mother the Church, and the Christ unto Whom he has been born; and these Three, in a mystical sense, are One. This is God's witness in the world.

As new-born babes: The custom no longer holds of reserving the Baptism of adults for Easter and Pentecost. The children of the faithful are admitted to living membership as soon as possible after birth; and older candidates are enrolled as soon as they are found worthy. The ancient discipline has changed on that point—the discipline, but not the spirit. We must always *grow in knowledge;* we must always *long eagerly for the milk of doctrine.* To know Christ, not speculatively, but practically and experimentally, as good Catholics know Him in the Sacraments, that is Life Eternal; and it brings the heart into living touch with Father, Son and Holy Ghost. *Philip, he that seeth me, seeth the Father!*

Desire ye in reasonableness milk without guile: Many long for the knowledge that saves; but not all attain to it; because few desire it *in reasonableness.* The phrase is a curious one, and lends itself to various interpretations. The reading in the Greek text would seem to suggest that we are to desire the Milk of the Word. Christ is the Sum of our Knowledge; He is also in His

own Humanity and Godhead the Substance of our Food —our Supersubstantial Bread. If things were as they ought to be, we should feed upon Him daily. As it is, we come very close to Him every morning in the Consecration of the Elements; we *understand* Him in the Mass; we taste Him, and find Him indeed pleasant in the mouth in the Holy Communion; for *His word is sweeter than honey and the honey-comb.*

And yet the greater part of mankind waste their days in the pursuit of speculative knowledge. They learn to discourse admirably *about* Christ; but the *living Christ,* the Christ that saves and rejuvenates His own in the Sacraments, they barely know. What does the author of the Imitation tell us? *He that would understand the words of Christ in all their depth and sweetness must strive to bring his whole life into conformity with Him. . . . If thou didst know the entire Bible in its outer aspect, and the sayings of all the philosophers to boot, what would the whole of it be worth without the love of God and His grace?* There are Catholics who make themselves acquainted with what they think is the reasonable side of their faith. They steep themselves in a certain kind of controversial lore out of an admirable spirit of loyalty. They are forever standing up, as they say, for the Church. That is good; but it is better first of all to kneel down with it and for it. The truer knowledge is acquired in such moments of abasement. This litigious spirit of championship is

too often but the poor makeshift of a radically weak will. It seeks to prove that will "good" to Our Lord by a specious show of fortitude and skill in argument. These men do not desire milk in reasonableness; the spurious thing they offer is sterile with guile. It produces nothing; for it is not by these things that the Church is helped. The knowledge that saves is not substantially different from the will that saves. In all true religion knowledge and will are one. We know our Lord in proportion as we obey Him. To obey Him is to make His will ours. The will is the whole man. By such appropriation are we rightly said to be divinized. *I live; now not I; but Christ liveth in me.*

Sing aloud unto God our Helper: It is in outer worship that a good Catholic often realizes how spiritual and interior his religion is. There is a something in all its exterior pomp that speaks most persuasively to the heart. The cry of the singers in the *Gloria*, or in the chanted *Credo*, the organ peals rising phrase upon phrase at the *Sanctus*, when the Great Human Presence is about to annihilate all barriers of space and transubstantiate the realities of matter, the sudden after-silence, made deeper and more religious by the strokes of the sacring-bell, rung for a testimony that Christ is really upon the altars of His people—do these things not sing aloud to the understanding heart? Do they not say that God is indeed our Helper? Never think lightly, never permit yourself to speak lightly, of the poetry of the Church's

worship. You can hardly go too often to listen to its music, however clumsily it may be performed in a strange land. *These are the joyful noises of Catholicism that speak of the continuity of things; they bear witness that the God of the Mass is none other than the God of Jacob.*

The Second Sunday after Easter

Introit: Ps. xxxii, 5, 6 and 1.
Epistle: 1 Pet. ii, 21-25.
Gospel: S. John x, 11-17.

Introitus: Misericordia Domini plena est terra, alleluia: verbo Domini cœli firmati sunt. Alleluia, alleluia.

Exsultate justi in Domino: rectos decet collaudatio.

The Entrance Versicle: *The earth is full of the loving-kindness of the Lord, alleluia: By the Word of the Lord were the heavens established, alleluia, alleluia.*

Rejoice, ye just ones, in the Lord: Praise is seemly in the upright.

THE earth is full of the loving-kindness of the Lord: Optimism is often said to be blind; the optimism of faith is doubly so. It looks out upon the face of the world, and discovers there the something that compelled its Maker long ago to call it good. The earth is full of the evidences of that loving-kindness in virtue of which created things first began to be. Time is not an afterthought. The material universe is not a blunder. It

is a divine work deliberately contrived. It is as wonderful in its degree as the newer creation by which death is changed into life and trivial everyday things are sanctified. The visible world and the invisible Church complete each other. The world is made spiritual by the Church; the Church is bodied forth and made palpable, because the world of sense is what it is. To see all that, and confess it, needs insight. Few men are optimists; few even of the upright are satisfied with the physical world in which they live. Reports about its shortcomings are as various as the temperaments which are in themselves a pathetic proof of its many failures. And yet the earliest pronouncement that Scripture has to make about it is that the material earth is a kind of sacrament of mercy. It is made for man's comfort. Even the higher part of him, the soul or reason, as well as the conscience to which all lower things must minister, can only find its legitimate development by conforming bravely to a vast and apparently non-human play of blind energy. In our humaner moments we admit that certain rarer spirits read the riddle of the world more wisely than those who groan over its discomforts or who rail at its cruelties. We call the poets wise, because they love the very agencies that often work our ruin, the forces that operate in sea and air and sky. But are the saints not wiser? How much more profoundly have they interpreted these hard facts for us! It was no mere conceit that made Francis of Assisi preach unto his "sisters the birds." The loving-kindness of God, which no

good Catholic ever doubts to find in the ministrations of the Church, is spread abroad like light over the face of nature. He who runs along Christ's way in faith may read it. The legend described for us in the *Fioretti* with such artlessness of living faith contains more than a poetic lesson. "My little sisters, the birds," said the Saint,

much bounden are ye unto your God, your Creator, and always in every place ought ye to praise Him, for that He hath given you liberty to fly about everywhere, and hath also given you double and triple raiment; moreover He preserved your seed in the Ark of Noah, that your race might not perish out of the world; still more are ye beholden unto Him for the element of the air which He hath appointed for you; beyond all this, ye sow not, neither do you reap; and God feedeth you, and giveth you the streams and fountains for your drink, the mountains and the valleys for your refuge, and the high trees whereon to make your nests; and because ye know not how to spin or sow, God clotheth you, you and your children; wherefore your Creator loveth you much, seeing that He hath bestowed on you so many benefits: and therefore, my little sisters, beware of the sin of ingratitude, and study always to give praises unto God. . . .

At the last, having ended the preaching, Saint Francis made over them the sign of the cross, and gave them leave to go away; and thereupon all the birds with wondrous singing rose up in the air, and then in the fashion of the cross that Saint Francis had made over them, divided themselves into four parts; and the one part flew towards the East, and the other towards the West, and the other towards the South, and the other towards the North, and each flight went on its way singing wondrous songs.

Each flight went on its way singing wondrous songs! Those were the songs that were sung in the morning of the world. Our Lord renewed the music long afterwards in His own Human Nature, and, like the true Pre-

centor that He was, He taught us the theory of it all in the parable of the lilies of the field and the birds that never gather into barns. Do we not understand all these mysteries aright when we comfort ourselves with the Loving-kindness of the Mass? How different must the day and its problems look to one who has learned his optimism at the foot of the Altar! His non-worshipping neighbors may think him strangely foolish and blind; but he knows *Whom he hath believed!*

The earth is full of the loving-kindness of the Lord: The visible Church is another evidence of that fulness. Wherever she works and ministers Christ is there, and He is the Loving-kindness of the Father made palpable and human. In every sacrament He lives and works for our comfort, and in the holiest of them He becomes our very Food. Could Mercy do more?

By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens established: How we are to conceive of creation, the production of a universe of matter and spirit, out of nothing, we shall never completely understand. The very idea of the thing has come to us with Christianity; and we can hardly hope to fathom its true significance until Christianity itself passes, with the justification of the last redeemed soul, from earth to heaven, and faith disappears before Reality. Meanwhile it is enough for us to know that, though all the acts of Godhead that work without the limitless sphere of divinity are indivisibly

one, yet they may be, and in Scriptural language often are, appropriated to one divine Person rather than to Another. It is not a metaphor to say that. It is one of those dark half-truths which will one day be cleared up, when we shall have passed from the region of shadows to the land where it is always light. It was through His only-begotten Son, born in time, that God redeemed the world. The new heavens, as well as the old, are the work of the Word. The Church is the evidence of His wisdom. Her sacraments, and all her wonderful types of human character are His especial handiwork. He made them in order and variety. The firmament in which they shine like stars was established when He died for our sins and rose again for our justification. *Tout est dans tout*, says an admirable French proverb. The first creation was but a parable of the second; and the second would seem to be but an image of the third. All are mysteries at present; for even the universe of matter is a sealed book to us; but the third, the holiest of them all, will reveal the answer to the earlier two; and the answer will be Christ. He is Alpha and Omega; He is the A, B, C of all our knowledge. The measure of our final understanding, in Him and through Him, will be the devotion with which we have learned Him here at the knees of our Mother, the Catholic Church.

The Third Sunday after Easter

Introit: Ps. lxv, 1-4.
Epistle: 1 Pet. ii, 11-19.
Gospel: S. John xvi, 16-23.

Introitus: Jubilate Deo, omnis terra, alleluia: psalmum dicite nomini ejus, alleluia: date gloriam laudi ejus: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Dicite Deo, quam terribilia sunt opera tua, Domine! in multitudine virtutis tuæ mentientur tibi inimici tui.

The Entrance Versicle: *Shout ye merrily unto God, O all ye lands, alleluia: Sing ye a psalm unto His name, alleluia: Give glory for His praise's sake: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

Say ye unto God: How terrible are Thy works, O Lord! Through the greatness of Thy power shall Thine enemies come cringing unto Thee.

SHOUT ye merrily unto God, O all ye lands: Men speak of gloomy religion, and they speak of glad religion; but true religion has neither the one note nor the other. It aims at putting the heart in tune with God. If that be true the burden of the worshipper must vary according to the mood that is uppermost within. The

wise Catholic takes his moods for the most part from the ecclesiastical season; and the present season is still one of exultation and joy. To be so Church-minded is not to be mechanical, as some contend. On the contrary, it is to be full of a reasoned and vicarious inspiration. It is to be set free from mere whimsicality, to be delivered from the anarchy of self and translated with all our feelings and passions into the orderliness of the kingdom of Christ. Jubilation, therefore, a sort of refined and chastened mirth, is the dominant note of all these post-paschal days. To pass them well we must be prepared to *shout merrily unto God with all the earth.*

From the beginnings of Christianity there have been local differences of ritual; but there has always been one spirit of praise. As Our Lord's kingdom takes definite shape in the world, and externalizes itself more and more, one notices how these apparently inevitable varieties tend to disappear. The rule and use of Rome become the rule and use of the world. The Easter merriment of the universal Church to-day is largely tempered by the sense of it that commends itself to St. Peter's See. It is true, there is not quite the same reason for conformity in these things as there is for conformity in regimen and expressed belief; but unity helps enormously, none the less. It makes the shout that goes up to God all the more stirring to those who lift it gladly, just because it is one. *Shout ye merrily unto God, O all ye lands!* Our own generation has witnessed a more mar-

vellous accord than any earlier one in the history of the Church. Every land is preparing to voice its praise in the very music that Our Lord's Vicar has enjoined as the most seemly for associated worship. So true is it that a living Church must grow and impose its vitality, slowly but inevitably, on all those who come within its influence. Nor must we think these matters of little import to the inner life of the heart. They mean nearly as much to the individual soul as they do to the Church at large. St. Ignatius of Loyola was fond of insisting rather paradoxically, by way of a test of genuine inner faith, upon certain outer usages prevalent in the Church of the sixteenth century. Whether his "Rules for Orthodox Thought" are quite as necessary, or as practical for these times or not, few will deny that the *instinct* they inculcate is eminently needful in the Twentieth Century. In a yearly shrinking world we can hardly hold too firmly to the old centres of belief and worship. Let us not be fascinated by the witchery of vanity. It is good to be modern, good to be local, good to be tolerant of all things that may win men to Christ; but it is better, surely, to lag behind with Rome than to go forward thoughtlessly with Canterbury or Geneva. All the ages are ours. Let the patience of the ages be ours as well.

Say ye unto God: How terrible are Thy works, O Lord! In all great joy there is a soul of strength. Behind the pæans of Easter the ear of faith can detect the

far-off premonitions of Whitsuntide. The Holy Ghost will come; and strong and terrible will His visitation be. As all the pride of the old Pagan world was doomed to wither and shrivel up before the tongues of flame that appeared in the upper chamber in Jerusalem, so the vanity and wisdom in which we Catholics sometimes put our trust too childishly will disappear before the fire that a great repentance may one day kindle in our hearts. *Say ye unto God: How terrible are Thy works!* Never let the joyous side of religion drown its austerer truths. Indeed this very joy, in the excess of which the heart is prone to wanton, is itself one of the most terrible of the works of the Lord. How few are fit to steep themselves in it, how few understand its awful relationship to the Passion!

Through the greatness of Thy power shall Thine enemies come cringing unto Thee! The meaning of the Hebrew word is rendered accurately enough by the Latin *mentientur*. It signifies a feigned awesomeness, an abasement that is wholly one sided, and not sprung spontaneously from reverence and love. It is just the sort of superstitious dread one sees, say, in the savage grovelling before his fetich. It is a blind recognition of power unrelieved by sweetness. The Force that the fetich embodies is apprehended as a thing to be propitiated by mechanical service. Inner conviction of its real excellence and worth has no place in the vain observance by which it is hoped to avert its terrifying

power. At all times in the history of the Church it has been part of the vigilance of St. Peter's See to warn certain types of Christian character against this degrading tendency. The catechists of every age are explicit in their teaching. The outer ordinances of the faith which Our Lord has provided for us in such abundance are profitable to those only who have not offered Him a *feigned obedience.* We must be upright of heart before we can use these things to our profit. There are thunder-storm Christians, just as there are thunder-storm fetichists. They cross themselves, they fall on their knees, they light blessed candles and sprinkle their houses copiously with Holy Water, when a storm roars out of the sky to tell them how closely death lurks in the air; but when the thunder-growl grows far and faint, their truer selves will rise and strut about once more, forgetful that they live habitually in mortal sin. Who has not met such men? Who has not felt a kind of charitable disdain for their spurious Catholicism? These are the enemies that come cringing to the Lord through the greatness of His power. The sudden sense of the nearness of death is a great sifter of consciences. It tumbles out the dross of our religion and leaves what is pure behind.

The Fourth Sunday after Easter

INTROIT: Ps. xcvii, 1-2.
EPISTLE: S. James i, 17-21.
GOSPEL: S. John xvi, 5-14.

Introitus: Cantate Domino canticum novum, alleluia: quia mirabilia fecit Dominus, alleluia: ante conspectum gentium revelavit justitiam suam. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Salvavit sibi dextra ejus: et brachium sanctum ejus.

The Entrance Versicle: *O sing unto the Lord a new song, alleluia: For marvellous things hath the Lord accomplished, alleluia: In the sight of the nations hath He openly unveiled His righteousness. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*

His own right hand, yea, His holy arm hath wrought salvation for Him.

O SING unto the Lord a new song: The most exalted forms of religious emotion express themselves inevitably in song. The most spiritual messages of the Old Testament, and the most significant found in the New, are charged alike with lyric feeling. The hymn

is an indispensable element in all true human worship. The more ordinary title in use among the Hebrews to characterize their own wonderful collection of spiritual songs confirms this view. The psalms were called *Sepher Tehillim* or Book of Praises. Throughout Scripture all the greater and more critical manifestations of Godhead are commemorated by hymns and canticles. Each new apocalypse calls for a new song. No wonder, therefore, that the Church, dwelling upon the glories of the new worship centred in her Eucharistic Sacrifice, bids us sing unto her Lord in a new song. The soul of that music must first be conceived in the heart by living faith. Where belief is vivid and sincere, love will not be dumb. The secret history of every Catholic soul is but an epitome of the history of the Church of which it is a sign and witness. The new doctrine is preached to it, and one by one its several wonders are seized and enshrined in song. It was not by accident that the liturgy of the infant Church very speedily took on a character which separated it in the judgment of pagan and Hebrew alike from the Synagogue out of which it surely grew. New wine, new bottles; new emotions, new song!

O sing unto the Lord a new song: Every genuine conversion illustrates the same tendency; for every genuine conversion with its accompanying change of heart, its *μετάνοια,* is a great manifestation of the Mercy that never lost patience with Israel. We say the old prayers, indeed; we recite the old formulas; we ease the burden

of the spirit in the old sweet songs; but how new they become when the sin that hid their meaning has been put away! Listen to the music of the Church at a solemn Mass on any Sunday after a good confession. Are the spiritual songs that the soul makes for itself in secret as it listens to the familiar words not new? There is a new heaven and a new earth then; we feel that all things have a divine novelty about them. St. Augustine's cry is the cry of all regenerates: *O Beauty so ancient, O Beauty so new! Too late have I loved Thee!*

For marvellous things hath the Lord accomplished: The divine wonders are of many orders. There is the visible universe, on the face of which is written the record that leaves the doubter without excuse. There is the invisible world of souls, in which a particular Providence rules; there is that princely portion of it comprising the visible and universal Church, of which Our Lord is Head and Ruler; there is that more compact and elect creation which follows Him in all sincerity of heart, making thereby a kind of soul of goodness in the evil that seems to flourish here so abundantly. In all these several spheres of activity God is wonderful beyond the power of man to conceive. And the Incarnation is His greatest wonder. To that is every other marvel subordinated. It was for that, as some of the Fathers are fain to believe, that He first stooped from His holiest and most inaccessible heaven of light, and stretched a hand into the outer dark, bidding the material universe

to be. Whatever school of opinion we follow as to the real motive of the Incarnation, it is still true to say that That is the Mystery of Mysteries, and the Mass, which renews hourly its profoundest act of abasement, as well as its sublimest and most heroic hunger of Love, is, in a sense, its most wonderful aspect. If one could only learn to be present at it daily with a true feeling for its place, not merely in the general economy of the Church, but in the life of one's own particular soul, then would one realize new wonders throughout each day of the year. Half of the secret that marks a good Catholic off from the common run of men in this modern age, just as it marked him off in the earlier period when cultivated pagan writers found him noteworthy in spite of the social contempt in which he was constrained to live, lies indubitably in the Mass. The fresh morning wonder attaching to that rite has added a mystery of holiness to his person. He is sacrosanct, because he has knelt through that cleansing and invigorating ceremony.

In the sight of the nations hath He openly unveiled His righteousness: God spoke to Israel in a cloud; when the fulness of time was come He spoke to all mankind in Christ. The divine Righteousness was displayed in human guise when Our Lord lived and suffered and rose again for our justification. The Mass is the daily Apocalypse in which that unveiling is renewed openly as it were, and in the sight of the nations. What seemed to be the exclusive privilege of Israel in the days

when it was merely promised, has become now the heritage of all men of good will.

His own Right Hand, yea, His holy Arm hath wrought Salvation for Him: In the making of the great Mystery the Word was not passive. He was the Right Hand of the Father in every other creation. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work.* His holy Arm wrought the Redemption which He longed to achieve for the children of Adam. The same thing is true of the Mass. Christ Our Lord is both Priest and Victim there; and though it is true, as St. Paul never ceases to remind us, that He is offered up for our sakes, yet it is truer still, as this verse of the psalm has it, that He works our redemption in that oblation primarily for Himself. He is God as well as Man. His glory is the Measure of things, the Measure even of the Mass, which seems to empty out His immitigable splendor with a kind of divine wastefulness.

The Fifth Sunday after Easter

INTROIT: Isaiah xlviii, 20, and Ps. lxv, 1 and 2.
EPISTLE: S. James i, 22-27.
GOSPEL: S. John xvi, 23-32.

Introitus: Vocem jucunditatis annuntiate, et audiatur, alleluia: annuntiate usque ad extremum terræ: liberavit Dominus populum suum. Alleluia, alleluia.

Jubilate Deo, omnis terra, psalmum dicite nomini ejus: date gloriam laudi ejus.

The Entrance Versicle: *Proclaim ye the Voice of Gladness, and let It be heard, alleluia: Proclaim It even to the end of the earth: The Lord hath delivered His people. Alleluia, alleluia.*

Shout ye merrily unto God, O all ye lands: Sing ye a psalm unto His Name: Give glory for His praise's sake.

PROCLAIM ye the Voice of Gladness: The more perfect a man's religion is the more glad it will be. Joy is the note of health always. We can never repeat that truth too often; and yet there is no truth more liable to be misunderstood. The deepest joy has little in common with levity. Between the sanest laughter and that hys-

terical counterfeit of it that we associate with Scriptural folly, there is fixed always that unbridged abysm of discord that we call deliberate sin. It is by no mere figure of speech that that yawning gulf is said to be without passage. If once we have succeeded in crossing we shall never find our way back until the Voice of Gladness, which is none other than the Word of God, be heard once more in our hearts. It is the daily business of the Church to proclaim It; and she never fails in her age-long task; but as Whitsuntide draws near, she seems almost to grow delirious with the rapturous intensity of her message. It is those who have heard the Voice of Gladness, whether for the first time in Baptism, or for the seven and seventieth time in sacramental Penance, who are likewise summoned to listen now to the prophecy of Him Who comes in the guise of the tongues of flame. *Proclaim ye the Voice of Gladness, and let It be heard, alleluia.* One mystical season of joy begets another in the ecclesiastical year. By having kept the Easter festival wisely we are prepared for the day of the New Wine at Pentecost.

Proclaim ye the Voice of Gladness: There are many things that keep the soul's religion from running reasonably to joy. A man's temperament often hinders him, in the first place; but that only means that few of us are brave enough to bring the whole will into captivity to Christ. We bring our sinful habits, we bring the blunders and burdens of the past; we do not bring our-

selves. Why should conversion be called a *new birth,* why should St. James speak of every perfect gift that faith accepts as a kind of token of a *new creation,* if we are not called upon to attempt the impossible and bring even our temperaments, our inherited selves, under obedience to Christ, Who is the Voice of Gladness in our inner life? But it is not merely in one's natural proclivity to dourness that these obstacles to healthy Christian joy are found. In many cases they are the result of an imperfect apprehension of the great practical truths of the spiritual life. St. Ignatius of Loyola felt so keenly on this point that he bade his sons assiduously cultivate an outer mirthfulness of countenance, in order that the soul, taking shape from the body's bent, might be brought at last to understand how vital to its true progress was the habit of a discreet joy. There are good people who speak slightingly of " consolation," as it is termed. They seem to think that the Holy Ghost will be able to work greater wonders in the heart, in proportion as He finds it troubled and disturbed, or weighed down with grief. They permit themselves to behave in these matters as Englishmen are said to do with the ordinary aches of life. They hug them and are made uncomfortable at the prospect of parting with them. These souls need to have the Voice of Gladness proclaimed unto them.

Let it be heard: There is a duty to spread joy, just as there is a duty to spread truth. Even before Chris-

tianity has its way with us, even before we wake to its wonderful effectiveness, and seek to bring the stranger in our gates under its austere but healing power, we feel instinctively that its pleasantnesses ought to be known. Many who are precluded by the disadvantages of education from giving an intelligent account of the claims of their creed, and who accept such enforced muteness meekly, will yet be able to make their religion loved, because they know instinctively how to secure a hearing for the Voice of Gladness in the world. In this sense the apostolate is open to all men; and the obligation to share in it is laid upon all. There are Catholics who are forever refining and explaining things away. They will defend nothing but the baldest statements of dogma. They have no justification to offer for the various and accidental sweetnesses that sometimes flow from the partial apprehension of God's truth at a given period of history, as in the Middle Age, say, or among special races as the Italians or Spaniards, or the peasants of Southern Germany. Such negative apologists have no real heart in their religion. They strive to make it understood, perhaps; *they do not strive to make it heard.*

Let it be heard: We must all live together in God's world. No true child of the faith toils altogether for himself. To realize that obligation is to realize the sacredness of Christian work. Now there is no sweetener of work like joy; and there is no joy like the testimony of a heart in which the Voice of Gladness, the Easter

Peace of Christ, is heard. Whether we pass our days in family-fellowship, trying to sanctify the natural claims of flesh and blood, or whether we live bound together in cloistral-obedience, trying to bless, even while we satisfy, the higher cravings of the spirit, we shall fail in our most fundamental duty, if we do not labor to make the gladness of Christ heard in His Church. We must endeavor "to increase the joy." By a kind of instinct we are always led to trust men of heart, even if they fall behind their fellows in more spiritual or intellectual gifts. The impulse is a sound one. It comes from the Word, Who enlightens us chiefly by joy. Here, then, is a good test of the genuineness of our religious spirit. Do we strive habitually to be glad? Do we strive to make the Voice of our own inner Gladness heard by those about us? Unless we do this we are unprofitable servants. Nothing makes our own particular talent multiply in the market of the angels like joy. If you have such wealth, put it out to interest, and your heart will be made clean; it will be enriched a hundred-fold.

Ut sis perenne mentibus
Paschale, Jesu, gaudium,
A morte dira criminum
Vitæ renatos libera.

The Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension

INTROIT: Ps. xxvi, 7, 8, 9 and 1.
EPISTLE: S. James iv, 7-11.
GOSPEL: S. John xv, 26-4, xvi.

Introitus: Exaudi, Domine, vocem meam, qua clamavi ad te, alleluia tibi dixit cor meum, quæsivi vultum tuum, vultum tuum, Domine, requiram: ne avertas faciem tuam a me. Alleluia, alleluia.

Dominus illuminatio mea, et salus mea: quem timebo.

The Entrance Versicle: *Hearken, O Lord, unto my voice, that voice wherewith I have cried to Thee, alleluia: Unto Thee hath my heart said: I have sought Thy face, Thy face, O Lord, will I seek: O turn not Thou Thy face away from me. Alleluia, Alleluia.*

The Lord is my Light and my Salvation: Of whom shall I be afraid?

HEARKEN, O Lord, unto my voice, that voice wherewith I have cried to Thee: In spite of the repeated alleluias there is an undernote of sadness in today's office, because Our Lord's merely temporal Pres-

ence seems to be withdrawn from the Church. That He should dwell with us forever in the ordinary human guise in which His disciples and kinsfolk knew Him in the beginning, was no part of His original plan. Indeed, taking the ordinary laws of our nature into account, such a contrivance of His Providence would appear to be at variance with every other expression of His purpose previously made known to us. We must walk here by faith. That is the substance of our trial; and so, though the human Presence of the Word in the world is the pivotal fact of history, and the one central force that saves us all from moral chaos, that very Presence Itself must be apprehended through a glass darkly. It will not show Its face. It is good that the soul should cry to It. The sincerity of that cry constitutes the real depth of Catholicism. Whatever theories we may hold as scholars on the frequency with which the Eucharistic Sacrifice was celebrated in the first two centuries, our present discipline of daily and even private Masses finds ample justification in this hunger of humanity for the One Face in which the heart of man recognizes its true Joy.

Hearken, O Lord, unto the voice wherewith I have cried unto Thee: Though private forms of prayer are always to be commended—we must be our own separate and individual selves, after all, in addressing the One all-embracing Self, in which the eternal mystery of consciousness can alone find satisfaction—it is not only wise,

but necessary to hold to public and consecrated formularies as well. There is almost a sacramental efficacy in the appointed phrases of the Church's liturgy. It was something more than mere intolerance of heresy and of the race-spirit which made Rome refuse to listen to the plea of the earlier Sixteenth-Century " reformers " for the use of the vernacular among the unlettered laities of the North. There is an instinct in Catholicism incomparably more profound than any logical justification which its theologians may devise in the interests of current controversies. The Church is rightly jealous of her formularies of prayer, because she is jealous of the original " deposit " of the faith; she is jealous of that faith, because she has a bride's hunger for each separate beauty of the countenance before which these partial Truths hang provisionally as a veil. We do wrong to grow weary of the sweet monotony of the Roman Missal. There is more in its prayers than we shall ever understand.

Unto Thee hath my heart said: Though it may not be evident to the casual reader, we have in these words another of those premonitions, to which we alluded last Sunday. All these intervening days are days of waiting. Every true heart watches from Ascension Day to Whitsuntide. It is one of the minor " retreats," the sacred times of withdrawal and expectation, appointed throughout the ecclesiastical year. Leo XIII has made no innovation in ordering an ecumenic " novena " by

way of devout introduction to the mysteries commemorated at Pentecost. He has only renewed what has always been the practice among the more fervent from the beginning. The Holy Ghost is rightly called Our Lord's Spirit, not merely because as a distinct Personality in Godhead He emerges mysteriously from that act of mutual love and yearning in which Father and Son indivisibly conspire; nor, again, merely because Our Lord in His human nature earned the right, so to say, as His Father's unique Witness and Prophet in the world, to send Him, but because it seems to be His business to do for the Church in every age, what Our Lord did in His own time, and notably during the forty days, preceding the Ascension; He is to bear testimony to Christ. This is a great mystery. The Church has never assumed to add to the original nucleus of teaching. It is her office merely to define, to explain, to enlarge upon the truths already in possession of the Catholic conscience. In this sense there is a secular and ever-increasing development, a true evolution, not of the faith in the minds of the faithful, but rather, as Vincent of Lerins puts it, of the general mind of the faithful with regard to the faith itself. The analogy between the advance of knowledge, the growth of mutual understanding, as it is called, between those who have loved faithfully and honorably for many years, and the steady advance of corporate Catholicism towards a fuller and more detailed perception of what is implied in each separate statement of primitive revelation, is too complete to need to be insisted upon

in our days. It is the *heart* of the Church that speaks in every fresh pronouncement, whether of Pope or General Council. A world, which is still largely without faith, and, therefore, without heart, cannot understand these things. Our most legitimate derivations are unwarranted accretions in its eyes.

I have sought Thy face: A more intimate and personal knowledge of Our Lord—that is the end of all practical Catholicism. *Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent! We seek His face!* That is what divides us from other bodies styling themselves Christians. Their desires would seem to be gratified chiefly by speculative knowledge. They are familiar with the mechanical side of Scripture—a kind of chapter-and-verse wisdom, with now and then a glimpse into archæology. *It is the letter that slayeth.* Catholicism moves differently. Scholar and illiterate alike we *seek one Face always.* We know that It gazes at us daily out of the mystery of the Mass.

Whitsunday

Introit: Wisdom i, 7, and Ps. lxvii, 2.
Epistle: Acts ii, 1-11.
Gospel: S. John xiv, 23-31.

Introitus: Spiritus Domini replevit orbem terrarum, et hoc quod continet omnia scientiam habet vocis. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Exsurgat Deus, et dissipentur inimici ejus: et fugiant qui oderunt eum a facie ejus.

The Entrance Versicle: *The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole round world: And That which holdeth all things together hath knowledge of His voice: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered: Let them also that hate Him flee from before His face.

THE Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole round world: It is one of the glories of Catholicism, that, in every age of the world since the first Christian Pentecost, it has described revealed religion as a stooping from heaven to earth. *God hath visited His people!* With a few notable exceptions heresy has approached

the problem from the opposite side, and so failed in its elucidations. Pelagianism is an obvious instance in point; and Protestantism, in spite of its earlier insistence on man's essential helplessness, has ended by committing itself to the same fundamental error. Nearly all the modern sects are non-sacramental and rationalistic in their tendency. Beginning with a futile profession of faith in the sufficiency of private judgment, they have remained on the low plane in which private judgment works. There is but one way to read aright the mystery of revealed religion. If we would understand its meaning for the individual conscience, we must consent to learn it from the lips of its own accredited Teacher. Through the Church alone *shall all men be taught of God.* So was it prophesied in the beginning, and so did Israel always hope. Pentecost made no reversal in the drift of things. That contention has an irritating front of intolerance to it in the eyes of the natural man; but it is not more unreasonable for a Catholic to enforce it in justifying himself to his non-Catholic neighbor, than it was for Our Lord to maintain at the time of His Ascension, that the way to Him was through a world-wide and Apostolic Church. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be condemned.* Revealed religion, then, implies that God is at work among His people. The presence of the Holy Ghost in the Church is at once the measure and the proof of that divine restlessness. *My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work!* In some mysterious way, of

which theologians can give little or no account, God, not merely in His obvious and rational aspect, but in His non-obvious, His baffling and supra-rational aspect, as well, is in the midst of His world. The Holy Trinity that we invoke so often in the Sign of the Cross is with us always. The Church's various victories over mankind are the evidence of that triune energy. It is an energy that throbs through all authentic history. The earth is full of the wonder of it,—the true *magnalia Dei.* In the advent of the Second Person the ground was cleared and the foundations laid; in the advent of the Third Person the new temple arose. Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian Church. Through her, because she is universal and Catholic, *the Spirit of God,* Who is likewise the Paraclete or Teacher, and Our Lord's proper Witness, *fills the whole round world.* He fills it by dwelling in every heart in a state of sanctifying grace, abiding with it as a Friend and Comforter. He fills it by applying the fruits of Our Lord's Passion wherever the Sacraments are legitimately administered. Indeed He seems to be in some mystical way the real Life-Giver in those instruments of sanctification. Are we not all *born of water and the Holy Ghost?* And is His energy not invoked in the Mass? The *Epiclesis* of the earlier liturgies, and the *Supplices Te rogamus* of the present Roman Canon, seem tc point to some mysterious function which the instinct of the Church rightly " appropriates " to Him. Let these thoughts be uppermost in your mind to-day when you kneel through the

Whitsunday Mass. It is because He *fills the whole round world* that we are enabled each morning to apply to our inner selves, that Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, *which are meat and drink indeed,* and in the virtue of which we have life everlasting in Him.

That which holdeth all things together: No doubt these words of the Book of Wisdom are employed in today's Introit in a deeply mystical sense, but the sense is not less true on that account. If that first body of believers, which *was born of water and the Holy Ghost* in the fiery ordeal of Pentecost, was destined, under the Apostles and their successors, to be the principle of religious unity for the world, is it forcing the text too far to say that the Catholic Church holds all things together for those who cling to the supernatural explanation of things? Has she not claimed to do this from the beginning? And has her claim not been justified on the whole by the history of Christian thought? Blot her story out of the memory of men, and how poor in moral performance the world becomes. Rome holds all things together. Her political importance to the historian is but a poor parable of her significance to the religious conscience, thridding its way painfully through the labyrinth of things to find the authentic Spirit of Christ. Never be remiss in the plain duties of obedience. By that virtue does the Holy Ghost fulfil His age-long mission. It is hard sometimes to see one's way, when selfishness and intrigue seem to possess even the very seat of

Moses; but whatever form of redress you seek, never let it be disruptive of unity. That is one of the sins against the Holy Ghost. No wonder that the Church has sometimes considered it as the unpardonable sin.

That which holdeth all things together: In another and hardly less significant sense it is the daily Mass that holds all things together. What an effective principle of unity lies in that daily rite! What does St. Paul say? *We, being many, are one Bread and one Body, all we that partake of that one Bread!* Who would go forth to the devil's business of fomenting discord, the discord created by tale-bearing, by caballing, by faction and intrigue, by fostering dissensions in families, by sowing trouble among friends, by starting misunderstandings in more important centres of Christian life, in a parish, in a religious community, in a diocese, or even in a nation at large, if he had grasped this fundamental idea of sacred fellowship, which is enforced in every Eucharistic celebration? All sincere lovers of the Mass are, in their own way, lovers and disciples of the Holy Ghost, *who keeps all things together* in that unifying rite. If ecclesiastical schism be a great sin, know that parochial, or even family schism, is hardly less heinous.

Hath knowledge of His Voice: That bewildering intimacy with Godhead, which heretics have observed as characteristic of Catholic countries, is only a consequence of the Church's teaching on the Incarnation and

on the office and work of the Holy Ghost in the sanctification of souls. Our Lord's Person, no doubt, attracts the larger share of this familiarity of devotion. That is inevitable, human nature being what it is. We are drawn by the cords of Adam. But in the lives of the greater contemplatives and in the writings of the approved mystics we may see how wonderfully is the Church's claim to *know the Voice of the Spirit* justified in every age. He is her Gift to human hearts; and that is why her word is always with power when she speaks to the single-minded. Even those uncounted elect who are never likely to enter into visible communion with her, because God will not work the moral miracle that shall undo the effects of inherited prejudice and long habits of error, yet owe their secret fellowship with the children of her household to this fact, that they too *have knowledge of the Voice* which is her very soul and understanding. We Catholics make up a mystical Body in the world. Christ is our Head, and we are His members and the Holy Ghost is the Soul by which we are made alive in Him forevermore. Happy the believer *who hath knowledge of that Soul's inner Voice speaking in his conscience at Mass time! With him it is always Whitsuntide!*

The First Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Ps. xii, 5-6 and 1.
EPISTLE: 1 S. John iv, 8-21.
GOSPEL: S. Luke vi, 36-42.

Introitus: Domine, in tua misericordia speravi: exsultavit cor meum in salutari tuo: cantabo Domino, quia bona tribuit mihi.

Usquequo, Domine, oblivisceris me in finem? Usquequo avertis faciem tuam a me?

The Entrance Versicle: *O Lord, in Thy mercy have I trusted: My heart hath rejoiced in Thy salvation: I will sing unto the Lord, because He hath dealt bountifully with me.*

How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me altogether? How long wilt Thou hide Thy face from me?

O LORD, in Thy mercy have I trusted: The most obvious mercy in which a Catholic instinctively confides is the mercy of the Sacraments. It is in them, as his faith instructs him, that he most surely discovers Our Lord. He becomes one with Him. Each separate

grace-giving sign effects that, whatever else it does; and union with Christ, Who is the Incarnate Mercy of the Father, is the fruit of its divine energy. Because we are conscious of sin, more than three-fourths of our prayers are made up of cries for God's pity. We entreat His loving-kindness. Our sense of His readiness to hear and to perform is the measure of our devotion. Preachers do well when they translate the duties of a Catholic into such concrete terms as frequent confession and the Sunday Mass. Religion is impossible without trust; and trust that does not go forward to meet the symbol that invites it is little better than unbelief. God could have left us without these material tokens of His bounty; He could have instituted other systems, established other ceremonies. But, in matter of fact, it has not pleased Him to do so. He has condescended to our limitations. A being that is not all of spirit compact does not seem obviously fitted for a purely internal and spiritual worship, nor would it be easy for such seekers after righteousness to put trust in invisible ordinances. The Incarnation would be a greater and more baffling Mystery than It is, if the religion which is rooted in It were not enriched by material evidences of Its right to the confidence of sinners in every age of the Church. The Sacraments are really the seven mirrors of the Sun of Justice. We apprehend the Mystery of the Incarnation as a Fact always present in the world, precisely because these contrivances of divine Love are ever within reach to inspire trust in It.

O Lord, in Thy mercy have I trusted: Most of us recognize, that, short of actual presumption, which is not a common vice with those who have once convicted their own consciences of sin, it is impossible to place too much reliance on the divine promises of pardon in Christ. And yet how many are secretly afraid of their own condition of heart. It is so easy to dupe oneself with fine phrases torn from their saving context in Holy Writ! There is but one supreme test in these dark matters of the soul: Have we employed boldly, and yet with carefulness, the instruments appointed to establish us in hope? Have we used the Sacraments of the Church in the spirit in which the Church herself enjoins or commends them? Have we gone frequently to confession? Have we heard Mass with the desire and the will to communicate as often as our pastors think prudent for us? If so, we may say without fear: *O Lord, in Thy mercy have I trusted!*

My heart hath rejoiced in Thy Salvation: But there is something better than mere trust in the ordinances of the Church. Many Catholics go that far without becoming candle-stick witnesses to Our Lord. Do we *rejoice in the Salvation we receive through the Sacraments? Are we glad to be allowed the privilege of daily Mass?* Enthusiasm for the Eucharistic Sacrifice is an infallible test, not merely of orthodoxy, but of piety; and piety is a distinct gift of the Holy Ghost. Joy in one's religion is the best of guarantees that the Spirit

of Pentecost is still at work in the upper chamber of one's own soul. It is also a premonition that He will have His way with us. And yet how common it is to find good people, men and women in the cloister even, who grow impatient, if a priest prolongs the sacred rite by three or four minutes beyond the wonted half-hour, in order that a few devout souls may communicate. Joy and impatience go ill together; and it may well be doubted whether such resentment be a sign of robust religious sense.

He hath dealt bountifully with me: It is good to have a phrase like that to carry in the heart all day long. The Mass is an Eucharistic service; it is Our Lord's act of thanksgiving to His Father; it should be our act of recognition likewise. In it we bear grateful testimony to His bountifulness. He hath sent us His own Son, and with Him given us all things—the Church and her bewildering wealth of ordinances, and our own separate and secret mercies as well. Nothing so ennobles a man as gratitude. It takes him out of his selfish isolation and makes the gift in which he is sweetly glad fruitful in grace. If this is so in the natural order what shall we say of the supernatural? Try to cultivate the eucharistic habit of mind in hearing Mass. It will save you from much unlovely Pharisaism, and make your religion a thing of sunshine and joy.

The Second Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Ps. xvii, 19, 20 and 2, 3.
EPISTLE: 1 S. John iii, 13-18.
GOSPEL: S. Luke xiv, 16-24.

Introitus: Factus est Dominus protector meus, et eduxit me in latitudinem: salvum me fecit, quoniam voluit me.

Diligam te, Domine, virtus mea: Dominus firmamentum meum, et refugium meum, et liberator meus.

The Entrance Versicle: *The Lord hath become my Stay, and hath led me into a wide place: He hath saved me, because He hath willed to have me.*

I will love Thee, O Lord, my Strength: The Lord is my sure Foothold, my Citadel of Defence, and my Deliverer.

THE Lord hath become my Stay: Shiftiness in belief is the sure forerunner of shiftiness in conduct. Practice is always rooted in theory, whether the theory be only a vague inarticulate instinct or a clear-cut logical statement. We may prate as we will about the ten-

dency we sometimes note in men to be better than their principles, the whole history of the Christian Church proves that such happy inconsistency is the privilege of the few. Most of us fall below our profession. If we sin in spite of an ennobling creed, what should we do were the creed itself to prove uncertain? And here we see the wonderfulness of God's providence in setting up a teaching as well as a governing Church. It is through her that the individual soul is saved from being the devil's weather-cock, blown about by every wind of doctrine or desire. We know that what was wrong in the days of the Apostles is wrong to-day; science cannot gloze a moral ugliness. We Catholics are called upon to be as austere and as uncompromising as the converts of Pentecost were. *The Lord is our Stay*, not merely in doctrine, but in conduct likewise. As He instructs the conscience through His own inner illumination—He is the Word that speaks to us always—so He fortifies the will through the special grace of every sacrament whereof we have received, but pre-eminently through the substantial grace and mystical indwelling of the Eucharist. Steadfastness in well-doing is the dream of the newly converted always; it is the hope likewise of those who have sincerely given their best years to Our Lord's service, and yet lapsed from time to time. To all such souls is the Mass, and the Communion that goes with It, a sure Stay. We are often called upon through the press of the world's claims upon us to remit a portion of our

private devotions; and there are souls so foolish and ill-instructed as to sacrifice without misgiving the precious half-hour of the early morning Mass. Better surrender any other act of religion than that. Nothing that we do can compare with it in value.

Again, in every age of Catholicism the watchfulness of the Holy See has been invoked to protect the faithful against new or spurious forms of devotion in the Church. It is possible for individuals, of course, who hold no special commission from St. Peter, to be over zealous in such vigilance, and to sin, perhaps even to give a certain kind of scandal, through their own unlovely negativeness. Yet if one finds oneself bewildered through the exceeding variety of these permitted novelties, let him take refuge in an increased steadfastness towards the Mass. *Our Stay is there.* That is the oldest "devotion" of the Church of God. It is the simplest, the easiest, and yet the most profound act of religion, of which even an Archangel could be capable. Saint or sinner, secular or religious, yes, in a true and vital sense, we may add, even priest and laic, we all meet on common ground in the presence of that Table. The faithful who are present are not there as idle spectators. They too *offer the Sacrifice,* not as ministers, indeed, but in virtue of that priesthood in which the least child of the Church has a share because of its oneness with Christ. It is through this Bread that the oneness which begins

with the engrafting of Baptism passes into more perfect union. *I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me!* Oh, St. Peter said well: *We are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people,* and it is in the Mass that we find our Stay!

He hath led me into a wide place: Breadth is all too rare a gift in this intolerant world; and, if the truth were only known, it is the saints who have loved Our Lord most consistently that have the largest share in it. How broad Our Lord Himself was, and what a stone of stumbling to the narrow-judging Pharisee! And His Church, is it not one of the reproaches made against her by Protestantism that she is too indulgent? It is an ancient charge. It was made in Tertullian's day. One hears it still in our own, even though Jansenism, as a system, be dead. While it is true that we cannot be too vigilant on the least point of orthodoxy, it is just possible that we may be too ignorant to make our vigilance worth anything to the Church. A good corrective in all these matters is knowledge. It is a rare antidote against that peculiar form of unfaith that we call distressed Pharisaism; but better than knowledge as a corrective is charity. Nothing broadens the heart of a true man like love. It is by the love of Our Blessed Lord, in the one Sacrament which is the testament of His Love, that the soul of the good Catholic walks serenely in a wide place. If we spent more time before the altar, there would not be so many inchoate schisms in the Church.

He hath saved me, because He hath willed to have me: We know by faith that Christ died to save us all: therefore we know by faith that the Father hath willed to have us all. No one is excepted. Christ is the measure of things. Whatever higher knowledge we possess of Godhead we hold through Him and His Spirit, Who brings all His sayings to our mind. The Word is the Father's Counsellor, and He has revealed Himself to us in the human nature which He took upon Himself as David's Son. Nor has He revealed Himself alone in that theophany. *Philip, he that seeth Me, seeth the Father!* We have learned much in learning Christ. The whole of the Church's authentic theology, in spite of the world's scorn of it as mere subtlety and words, still outtops all knowledge. Before Our Lord's day a Jew could declare, in all good faith, that salvation was of his race. We know now how narrow was that view. In Christ there is neither Greek nor barbarian, bond nor free. But the old exclusiveness of the Jew reappears from time to time under many disguises. The Church long knew it as Jansenism; and even to-day it lurks undetected in many sour hearts. Let us be on our guard against such a leaven. We are sure that He hath saved us, *because He hath willed to have us.* That Will is veritably catholic, embracing all time, all races and breeds of men. It is the first Will, true and sincere, and full of affectionate devices; but It is not absolute. There we have the reverse of the picture. To make It absolute depends upon ourselves. Shall we do it? It is an awful power,

this power of free will; and, like all agents of unknown but terrible force, it needs to be dealt with *in fear and trembling;* so, an Apostle reminds us, is our ultimate and personal salvation, the second divine Will to save, worked out in us.

The Third Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Ps. xxiv, 16-18 and 1-2.
EPISTLE: 1 Pet. v, 6-11.
GOSPEL: S. Luke xv, 1-10.

Introitus: Respice in me, et miserere mei, Domine; quoniam unicus et pauper sum ego: vide humilitatem meam, et laborem meum, et dimitte omnia peccata mea, Deus meus.

Ad te, Domine, levavi animam meam, Deus meus, in te confido, non erubescam.

The Entrance Versicle: *Turn Thine eyes towards me and take pity on me, O Lord, for I am without friends and poor: Behold my lowliness and my travail: And pardon all my sins, O my God.*

Unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: My God, I have put my trust in Thee, let me not be ashamed.

TURN Thine eyes towards me. That is always the cry of a heart in trouble. Sorrow is like a night of the soul; it dims our perception of too many things. It is the sight of God's face that brings back the day. *Though sorrow endure for a night, yet joy cometh in the morning.* The sight of God's face is Israel's

idea of peace and comfort. *Turn Thine eyes upon us and show us the light of Thy countenance, and it shall be well with us.* The blessing for the people which God dictated to Moses as a kind of formulary, to be entrusted to the care of Aaron and his sons, and which we still read in the Book of Numbers, was couched almost in these set terms. *The Lord make His face shine upon thee and be gracious to thee: The Lord turn His countenance upon thee and give thee peace.* St. Francis of Assisi would use no other form of prayer when asked to give a "blessing."

Take pity on me; for I am without friends and poor: Unicus et pauper! Solitary, desolate, and with little or nothing to call my own. It is here that we find the real burden of this *Introit.* The Epistle wherein St. Peter invites us to humble ourselves beneath the mighty hand of God that He may lift us up in the time of His visitation, and the portion of St. Luke's Gospel on the parable of the Lost Sheep, which is read later on, make this abundantly clear. Unregenerate human nature, even at its best, is poor and needy; but the Catholic in a state of mortal sin is poorer still. He is in the melancholy case of the Angel of the Laodiceans. In his ordinary work-aday mood, when his conscience is stifled by the roaring looms of time, he thinks himself a passable mortal, not an utterly abandoned sinner, it is true, but no great hero, just as sure. But, when conscience gets a hearing, what is its message? *Thou sayest, I am rich and in-*

creased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable and poor, and blind, and naked.

Running all through to-day's Mass there is the divine paradox, that, if we would be rich, we must first be poor; if we would be lifted up, we must dare to abase ourselves; if we would have a share in the joy, which is the real life of the angels in heaven, we must be in sorrow, in lowliness, in travail. When a man is truly penitent for his sins he is *without friends and poor.* He stands alone for a while. The world drops away from him; the friendships of the world are his to depend upon no longer.

Little children, love not the world, said the Disciple who had heard Our Lord declare on the night of His First Mass that he did not pray for the world, but only for *His own.* We Catholics cannot afford to love the world, even though we live in the midst of it. *What is in it, after all,* cries St. John, *but the three great lusts—the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life?* It is by these things that the heart is seduced; the inner man makes friends with them. If we are to go back to God, we must break with these inner attachments, these liens of the soul; we must be able to say in all honesty: *Unicus et pauper sum ego,* "without friends and poor." Blessed, indeed, is such friendlessness, thrice blessed such poverty! Is it not written: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven?* Try to hear Mass to-day in that poverty of

spirit. Pray for strength to travail. It is not easy of itself to be such a "laborer;" but Our Lord makes it easy. If we faint through the effort He will go out to meet us and lift us up on His own shoulders. Then may we cry in perfect bravery: *Pardon all my sins, O my God.*

The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Ps. xxvi, 1, 2, 3.
EPISTLE: Rom. viii, 18-24.
GOSPEL: S. Luke v, 1-12.

Introitus: Dominus illuminatio mea, et salus mea: quem timebo? Dominus defensor vitæ meæ; a quo trepidabo?

Qui tribulant me inimici mei, ipsi infirmati sunt, et ceciderunt. Si consistant adversum me castra, non timebit cor meum.

The Entrance Versicle: *The Lord is my Light and my Salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the Protector of my life: of whom shall I be afraid?*

Mine enemies that trouble me, they are enfeebled, they are fallen: Though a camp be pitched against me, my heart shall not fear.

THE Lord is my Light and my Salvation: whom shall I fear? It is a part of man's trial that he must fight for the most part in a twilight world. His adversary is not seen. This is true, not only of the devils who attack us by suggestion from without, but

of our own lusts that work our undoing within. Some of us never quite realize how subtle and withdrawn these last are until it is too late. And yet we are warned that *a man's foes are those of his own household.* Inherited proclivities—the true and heavy burden of our fathers' sins—acting upon our own unpruned exuberance of disposition, and the issue developed, in turn, by years and opportunity—what a spawn and brood of evil to fight against! There is the true offspring of Chaos and primeval Night. It often happens that we carry it through half a life-time in unsuspected corners of the heart. We admit, humbly enough, and in an abstract way, because we have been taught to say these things in our childhood, that we are capable of a good deal. There are large possibilities of sin in us, we say. But we seldom divine their real drift or measure the sweep of their influence. Happily, the opportunity for their play does not occur. It is "never the time and the place and our *real Self* altogether" with us; and we are, in consequence, like men groping in the dark. We make conjectures; but, as is often the case when inter-stellar distances are described to a child, our random guesses stir the conscience without overawing it.

Even to one who has passed the boundaries of middle life it is hardly an exaggeration to say, that there are vast unmapped tracts of hinter-land in him. He does not know himself. It is still a twilight, unexplored world that holds him; always a wayfarer wandering in the night. Are not Scripture and ecclesiastical history

full of melancholy instances in illustration? Saul, and the wise King Solomon, Judas Iscariot, and Nicholas the Deacon, James the Hermit and the long line of heresiarchs and apostates—do they point no moral? Are these not instances to terrify?

From my secret sins, from the evil I have not yet done, deliver me, O Lord! There is the night in which few of us can work, unless the Lord be *our Light and our Salvation. Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?* cries the conscience out of the dark of the terrified soul. And the Watchman, *He that keepeth Israel, He that will neither slumber nor sleep,* will make answer: *If ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come!* So did He give comfort in the days of Isaiah; and now in the New Israel His hail is not less inspiring. *I am the Light of the world; he that followeth Me walketh not in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* And that light is with me today, though the Face from which it shines be dark under the Elements offered there on the altar. If He is *my* Light and *my* Salvation, why should I be afraid of my conjectural and evil self?

The Lord is the Protector of my life: The sense of the original text might be conveyed by a somewhat bolder metaphor: Jehovah is my Fortress, or "High Place"; He is the true citadel of my heart. I entered in there by Baptism, and I dwell there henceforth by my daily life of little duties as a child of His One

Church. There is a Stronghold against which no Gates of the Underworld shall ever prevail. In that "Elect Church" I live and move and have my being—living and moving and having my being all the more infallibly, thereby, in Him. *Thither the Tribes go up!* If we are of His "chosen" we shall be jealous of our vocation as Catholics. *As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so is Jehovah about them that put their trust in Him.*

When a man looks down from the vantage point of that exceeding great eminence to which he has been lifted up by Our Lord's Cross and Passion—*and I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men to Myself*—he realizes how uncertain is the fate of all those who dwell beyond the outer walls of the visible Church. He does not judge them. God forbid! He knows that the arms that built that matchless citadel, *hung round with a thousand shields*, are wider even than the visible Church. But, none the less, the fate of those who fight without is dubious and disquieting to think upon; and so the missionary spirit is born in him. We are all called, priest and layman, each in his degree, to be fishers of men, as the Gospel of the Mass reminds us. Though the world be encamped over against the Church in her corporate visible life, though it be encamped over against each individual soul, which is itself a kind of Church in miniature, though it dig trenches and threaten to leave not a stone upon a stone, the heart of the true believer fears not. Jehovah is his Refuge. He finds in Our

Lord an Interior Castle as impregnable and unassailable as any imagined by the devout fancy of a St. Teresa.

They are enfeebled; they are fallen: Even in natural things there is no panoply like trust; how much more so in the things of faith? What is the meaning of the story of Joseph, of King David, of the chaste Susannah, but that? And the Church in our own generation, have her enemies not been enfeebled? Have they not fallen? Piedmont, Prussia, Republican France, secret revolutionary tribunals—not one of the *powers of this world* has succeeded in its wicked designs against the Holy See. They may strip it of its temporal belongings, but its real strength is greater than ever. Never before was the prestige of the Papacy greater; never was its influence more undisputed.

Few souls have the power of waiting. Our Lord gives it to those who serve Him in faith. The pagan poet's picture of the righteous man standing four-square to every wind of adversity, unshaken in his purpose while the very heavens tumble about his ears, is doubtless a fine spectacle; but this vision of the psalmist, put before us in to-day's Mass, wherein the soul beholds without dismay the enemy pitching his camp against her, is incomparably finer still. *They are enfeebled; they are fallen; though a host be encamped against me my heart shall know no dread.*

Hope is a good thing always; we are saved by hope. This serene note of confidence in the Entrance

Versicle seems to be inspired by the thought that *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Liberty now, in spite of the groaning of the creature, *the liberty of the children of God,* set before us in St. Paul's exhortation to the Romans—to endeavor to realize that, will bring us a true enfranchisement of the heart. Even the body and its lusts will become saner, as the years go on, for that larger self-control. It will be a kind of anticipated "glory," a veritable *redemption of the body,* before its appointed time, *in Christ Jesus.*

It will be good under the stimulus of thoughts like these to hear Mass to-day with the purpose of gaining some such notion of Our Lord's work in the Great Mystery. If we communicate, He will feed us with *the food of plenty,* by which alone we shall have strength to follow Him, and walk no more in darkness. As *the day-spring arises in our hearts* let the soul cry with the Church, the Nursing Mother of all honest souls, in her Matin-Hymn for Tuesday:

O God from God and Light from Light,
Who art Thyself the day,
Our chants shall break the clouds of night;
Be with us while we pray.

Chase Thou the gloom that haunts the mind,
The thronging shades of hell,
The sloth and drowsiness that bind
The senses with a spell.

The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Ps. xxvi, 7, 9 and 1 partim.
EPISTLE: 1 Peter iii, 8-16.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. v, 20-26.

Introitus: Exaudi, Domine, vocem meam qua clamavi ad te: adjutor meus esto: ne derelinquas me, neque despicias me, Deus salutaris meus.

Dominus illuminatio mea, et salus mea: quem timebo?

The Entrance Versicle: *Hearken unto my voice, O Lord—that voice wherewith I have cried aloud to Thee: Be Thou mine Helper: Leave me not utterly, neither give me to scorn, Thou God of my Salvation.*

The Lord is my Light and my Salvation: whom shall I fear?

THE burden of this day's Entrance Versicle, vague and inconclusive as it seems to be, when considered apart from the rest of the office, becomes clear and sharp in its pathos when uttered with the great lesson of the Sermon on the Mount laid prudently to heart. A brief but striking portion of that Sermon has been selected as the Sunday Gospel extract, and it contains a protest

against formalism, against a self-willed conceit and a too undeviating literality in devotion. *Unless your righteousness shall abound more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* That is the danger which impels us *to cry aloud with the voice;* that is the offence to which many of us are naturally prone, and on account of which we beseech Our Lord *not utterly to abandon us, not to give us over to scorn.* God has always scorned the mere formalist in religion. Our Lord never ceases to rebuke that manner of man. It is to be saved from the fundamental error of his class and kind that we lift our voices in the office, crying aloud in the collect to Him *Who prepares invisible riches for them that love Him,* that we may attain to what He has promised. The religion of Our Lord is a religion of charity. It begins and ends in love. That is its Alpha and Omega. It will spend itself for others, because He first spent Himself for us. We may sit down daily at His Eucharist, which is our antepast here of the eternal Marriage Supper of the Lamb, we may busy ourselves to very weariness in an hundred edifying and decorous externalities of religion, but if we lack the Marriage Garment, *the linen clean and white which is the vesture of His saints,* we are but eating and drinking condemnation to our own souls. Faith is good, it is indispensable; but of itself it will not save. Works are good; the more active and self-denying and laborious, the better; God sent us here to work; but works alone will not save

us either. It is faith working through charity that does that; faith keeping His commandments, and so preserving at all costs that initial gift of sanctifying grace, which seems to compel God to be our friend. Without such friendship salvation is impossible.

That is the true and plain account of the matter. Even little children who study the Catechism know that. But there is a further lesson derivable from this primary one, and clearly inculcated in to-day's liturgy, which children of a larger growth are in constant danger of forgetting. The sin of the Pharisees did not utterly pass away with the unlovely sect that gave it a name. A good deal of it has survived as a prevailing habit of mind to try the elect and give the Devil and his angels ample occasion for mischief in the Church of every age. It may exist at our doors. Some of it may leaven our own hearts. Search there with the lamp of His doctrine and see.

The Lord is my Light and my Salvation: whom shall I fear? If we have wisely apprehended Our Lord's human character, we shall discover certain notes about it scattered up and down the Gospels. He is patient; see how He treats Judas, and Peter, and the forward mother of the Zebedees. He is merciful; He is kind; He is full of a condoning pity. *Hath no man condemned thee? Neither will I condemn Thee.* He pays " visits of mere civility," as they would be called to-day. He sits at meat

with the socially ostracized, sometimes dealing with their spiritual clumsinesses with a kind of gently repressed irony. He is accessible to sinners; He is not above consorting with wine-bibbers; He is broad and tolerant in His interpretation of Tradition and the Law. To two classes only does He seem to deny Himself; and on them alone is the passion of His scorn poured out. He denounces those who give scandal; and He is, if anything, harder still on those who take it. The latter class was made up chiefly of the stricter Pharisees; and of all the recorded denunciations of Our Lord none are quite so charged with anger as the words with which He unmasks the unreality and hypocrisy of their religion. *Making clean the outside of the cup*,—that is His general characterization of their efforts after strictness and a fuller ceremonial service. Our Blessed Lord never condemned a taste for ritual as such. On the contrary, He seems to have loved the beauty of His Father's house, and to have been diligent in going up thither for prayer at the time of the feasts. What He really rebuked in the Pharisee was the temper that insisted on the externals of religion at the cost of its inner spirit, its real life and substance. This temper seems to have been accompanied by a great deal of conscious deceit. There was a party in Israel which deliberately made use of the popular reverence for the outer shows of worship in order to further its own political ends. But there was another party also, whose hypocrisy was more latent and less deliberate. These were the *Chasidim* who were such sticklers for ceremonial righteous-

ness. They were not at all what we should call wicked men. They could give a very good account of themselves, and could point to honorable names in their defence. St. Paul seems to have belonged to them in early life. Yet these, too, were self-seekers in Our Lord's judgment. *Blind leaders of the blind,* He calls them, first duping themselves, and so rendering their deceit of other men the more insidious and hard to meet. There is no enthusiasm so catching as the enthusiasm that begins in leasing and self-deception. It wins victims by its apparent sincerity. Does not the history of all false religious movements prove that?

Leave me not utterly, neither give me to scorn, Thou God of my salvation: We Catholics are delivered from the spirit of Pharisaism by personal devotion to Our Blessed Lord. In the measure in which we apprehend Him, and come close to Him, in that measure are we saved from all illiberality of heart. He will not *leave us utterly, neither will He give us over to scorn.* He will be our Teacher as of old. *And they shall be all taught of God.* Now God's thoughts are not the thoughts of a Pharisee. How broad the more lovable saints are—St. Anselm, St. Aelred of Riveaux, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Ignatius, St. Philip Neri, St. Francis of Sales! How tolerant their lives seem beside the fussier efforts of smaller and yet thoroughly virtuous men! How winning they have made Our Lord's religion! There is nothing we read of in their careers that we dare pour scorn upon, be-

cause there was little in them from which Our Lord would have turned away in contempt. We see the same deep truth illustrated in the few touching traits recorded in the New Testament of the inner circle of particular friends who won so large a share of His human affection, in St. Philip, who is always ready to introduce strangers to Him—*Sir, we would see Jesus*—in St. John, who commands us to love one another, if we would be true lovers of the Word, in St. Peter, who exhorts us to courtesy and hospitality.

Leave me not utterly, neither give me over to scorn: It matters a great deal what views we imbibe of God in our childhood. All our after-career in His Kingdom is colored by those earliest lessons. Some of us are born Pharisees; and we are abandoned utterly, given over to a kind of divine scorn from our youth up: that is to say, we are by nature narrow, hard, illiberal, austere to others, gracious to ourselves, over-careful of little things, concerned about appearances, scarcely, if at all, disturbed about the real condition of our consciences. Grace is poured into the grotesque and meagre vessels of our souls in slender measure. We have mean notions of God, because we are too full of our own cheap philosophies, "too replete with very thou," too shrewd in our own activities. Others, again, are made Pharisees by education, by tyrannous and ill-instructed elders, by unsound manuals of devotion. The remedy for both classes lies in more knowledge of Our Lord's career. Let them read the New

Testament religiously, anxious only to understand it in the spirit of the Church. Let them read the lives of great saints and doctors like St. Jerome, SS. Gregory and Basil, books like the Confessions of St. Augustine; let them read Saints' Letters as well as Saints' biographies, St. Teresa's and those of St. Francis Xavier and of St. Francis of Sales. Let them remember that by all pettiness of view they de-Catholicize themselves, and so fall out of touch with the real mind of the Church, which is a large and liberal mind, tolerant of abuses almost to the dividing line of scandal, ready to stretch principles well nigh to their breaking point, provided only men come to know her Lord and Master and serve Him in simplicity and joy. In everything that is not absolutely vital and essential to orthodoxy let them learn the saving virtue of silence when controversy arises, remembering that the Church will speak when the true hour comes. In all things let them defer to others. To cultivate habits like these is to make one's religion truly internal and spiritual, fulfilling St. Peter's behest, becoming *like-minded in prayer, sympathetic, as being lovers of brotherhood*—a sweet and pleasant thing to look upon always in the corporate life of the Church—*tender-hearted, humble-minded, not rendering evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but contrari-wise, blessing.* "Love," says St. Ignatius of Loyola, "is a matter of deeds rather than of words." That is true of every lofty emotion of the heart, and truest of all of religion, which is love in worship. So *shall judgment*, that is, the ability to form wise

views and sound views of Our Lord's practical teaching, *return unto righteousness, and all the upright in heart shall follow it; for the Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance.*

Some souls glory in belonging to "schools" and "movements;" but it is better to belong to Christ. One hears un-Catholic speech of this kind here in America sometimes. But is it not the old folly that St. Paul rebuked? Was it a "school" then that died for us? Was it by a "movement" that we were redeemed and made alive in the Assembly of the Saints forevermore?

Give us not over to scorn for these Pharisaisms of the understanding, O Thou God of our Salvation, but be our Light and our Reconciliation to all the brethren; that, coming, we may offer gifts!

The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm xxvii, 8, 9, 1.
EPISTLE: Romans, vi, 3-11.
GOSPEL: S. Mark, viii, 1-9.

Introitus: Dominus fortitudo plebis suæ, et protector salutarium Christi sui est: salvum fac populum tuum, Domine, et benedic hereditati tuæ, et rege eos, usque in sæculum.

Ad te, Domine, clamabo: Deus meus, ne sileas a me: ne quando taceas a me, et assimilabor descendentibus in lacum.

The Entrance Versicle: *The Lord is the Strength of His people, He is the wholesome Defence of His Anointed One: Save Thy people, O Lord, and give Thy blessing to Thine inheritance: Be Thou their Shepherd-King forever.*

Unto Thee, will I cry, O Lord: My God, be Thou not deaf to me: If at any time Thou shouldst be silent (when I speak), I shall become like them that go down into the grave.

THE Lord is the Strength of His people, He is the wholesome Defence of His Anointed One: The story of human effort is annotated, for the most part, by two unevenly distributed types of scholiast. It is

commented upon by those who admire and by those who despise its achievements. By natural temperament, or through the influence of example or training, some few of us are given to praise; but the many look out upon the world only to laugh at its folly or to weep over its burden of sin. The disciples of Democritus and the followers of Heraclitus divide the watch-towers between them; and to neither school does the game seem greatly worth the candle. Man is not great; because man is not strong; his feebleness is a commonplace with the moralist. All this is true of the merely mundane field of mortal activity, where the *prize is a corruptible crown*, a wreath of wild parsley or of bay, set too often on the brows of a trickster in the contest.

In Our Lord's Kingdom, however, the case is perplexingly different. In that Realm of the Spirit the weeping school is not without its representatives, it is true; yet if we are familiar with the Church's wiser prophets, the saints and doctors who interpret for us the real burden of her teaching, we shall find that, on the whole, joy in man's power to accomplish something in Christ, rather than grief over his helplessness, is the predominating note of the liturgy. *Jehovah is the Strength of His people; He is the wholesome Defence of His Anointed One.* Even as the Father's love was a mightier protection than twelve legions of angels would have been to Our Lord in the bitter hour of His passion, so is that same love to every soul that has access to the unseen Father

through the grace of adoption won for it by the Son. With Him we have gone out to meet death in Baptism, and like Him we have risen up and are alive now in His Church forevermore.

The wholesome Defence of His Anointed One: There are many Christs to-day, because the first Christ was found strong. We are made like to Him in Baptism, and the likeness grows hourly with each fresh infusion of grace. It passes into identity, almost, in the mystery of one worthy Communion. The language of some of the early Fathers is so bold on this point that it will hardly bear translating. So long as we keep the exceeding precious liquor of His grace in these earthen vessels of our bodies we are His anointed ones. His strength is our strength, and it becomes a very wholesome defence,—a defence, that is to say, that leaves us unscathed and sound—in every attack of that ancient foe, who shoots his arrows by noonday, and who waits for us, seeking to undo us, like a pestilence in secret places. We are Christ's and Christ is God's.

Save Thy people, O Lord, and give Thy blessing to Thine inheritance: Be Thou their Shepherd-King forever: The shepherd-boy, David, the son of Jesse, become King over Israel, still sees in God but the divine original of his own human father. Jehovah is his Shepherd; the chosen of Israel are the sheep of His inheritance; the Lord shall make them to lie down in green pastures;

He shall feed them forevermore. What does Our Lord do for His Church every day in the Mass, but bid His elect people sit down *where there is much grass,* and feed them, not with bread as He fed the four thousand described in the day's Gospel-portion, but with His own Body and Blood? Surely, He is their Shepherd-King forever!

In the Hebrew original of the psalm from which the Entrance Versicle is adapted, we read the words: *Shepherd them, lift them up, as long as time shall last.* He answers that petition at all times and under every possible dispensation, in His general providence over the lives of *them that put their trust in Him;* but it is in the visible Church, in the daily celebration of the Divine Mysteries, that He answers it in a way that must leave the faithful soul dumb with wonder, as often as it thinks devoutly on the Gift of the Eucharist. It is in that act of worship that, not our hearts only, not mind and imagination and desire, but our very bodies as well, are lifted up. We feel the *strength of the everlasting arms.* It is in this sense, too, that we may understand Our Lord's pathetic reference to His Crucifixion. *And I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men to Myself.* And He still draws. How many honest hearts have been impelled to seek Him, as a stray sheep might seek a shepherd, merely because they have heard what we Catholics believe about the Mystery of the Mass! Is not the doctrine of the Real Presence, which gives meaning to that act of wor-

ship, and which identifies it, not in type or figure, but in awful Reality, with the one self-sufficient, all-atoning Sacrifice of Calvary, well compared to the "shadow of a great rock thrown across a thirsty land?" *Now the Rock is Christ,* says St. Paul. "Oh, if it were only true!" cries a devout Nonconformist writer of these days. And it is true. *We know in Whom we have believed.* He has said: *Do this for a commemoration of Me;* and His *flesh is meat indeed,* and His *blood is drink indeed.* How the thought of that draws! Yes, He lifts up; He is our Shepherd forevermore. The good Catholic knows that.

If ever Thou shouldst be silent (when I speak), I shall become like them that go down into the grave: The silences of love are always a trial. These are the things that send a man down in sorrow to his grave. And the silences of God—have the faithful, who reflect and yet hope, any trials comparable to those? There is so much unrebuked wickedness on this earth, so much successful guilt. It flourishes like the green bay tree. "God is in heaven," we are tempted to cry, "and all is *not* right with the world." We say, *His arm is not shortened and His hand is stretched out still;* but it is a Hand all scarred with toil, bloody, and nailed to a cross. The discomfiture of the prophets of Baal has become the discomfiture of the *remnant who have not bent the knee.* We hear the old religious taunt addressed to the Church today: *Cry aloud; peradventure He sleepeth, or He is*

on a journey. No; He does not sleep. We hear Him, and know Him every day in the transmuting of the Elements. *His arm is not shortened; His hand is stretched out still;* and He is silent; because He is on the Cross of His Love. That is a silence that cries aloud into the ear of faith. Faith will never go down into the pit.

The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm xlvi, 1 and 2.
EPISTLE: Romans, vi, 19-23.
GOSPEL: S. Matthew, vii, 15-21.

Introitus: Omnes gentes plaudite manibus: jubilate Deo in voce exultationis. Quoniam Dominus excelsus, terribilis: Rex magnus super omnem terram.

The Entrance Versicle: *O all ye peoples, clap your hands: Shout ye unto God in ringing tones: For the Lord most high is awful: He is the "Great King" over all the earth.*

O ALL ye peoples, clap your hands: shout ye unto God in ringing tones: Loyalty is not a virtue greatly in honor with the modern world. The "sophisters, economists and calculators," who now instruct with various precept, where kings and leaders of old preferred to teach by example, have insisted with some show of plausibility on a selfish lesson. Allegiance, they say, is as indispensable as ever it was; but it is due to ideas and principles rather than to persons. Let men hang together and go forward, if they will, but let them not put their trust in kings or presidents. Parliaments are better than cap-

tains; and the shrewdness of the many is always safer than the inspiration of one. It is a chilling philosophy; but since it has enabled us to achieve something, we have accepted it without much protest, and turned an old-fashioned virtue out of doors.

Life without loyalty is a very dreary business, as private men learn when friends fail them. Has not King David told us something on that head? And he was but a type. A greater than King David broke His heart when He saw how those upon whom He had depended ran away from the terror and disgrace of His Cross, and how His own Father in heaven seemed for a dark hour to fail Him in that friendless dereliction. Yes, life without loyalty would be dreary indeed. Civic society will master the same melancholy truth one day, in spite of all its silly talk about allegiance to that "Conscious Law, which is King of Kings." For we were made in the beginning to love and to be loved. Love goes out to a person. It will not follow after an abstraction. It needs a person to cling to, as the ivy needs the wall. That is the real meaning of the Entrance Versicle in to-day's Mass. Our Lord is King, King over the Church. Is that not His true Kingdom, the "inheritance" which He was obliged to win back with much fighting and shedding of innocent blood? He is King over society, King over all the kingdoms of this world, though too many of them are arrayed against Him, and seek their own ends in defiance of His law. He is King over each individual heart. As once in the childhood of

the world, and even to-day where sovereignty is real and true, the sight of royalty rouses men to enthusiasm, to shouts of triumph, and to a wild clapping of the hands, so now daily on the altars of His Church, in the presence of a Kingship which has literally discrowned Itself of all majesty, faith cries aloud to all peoples, bidding them clap their hands and cheer with exultant voices; for Christ the Lord, He is surely King, a veritable *Great King over all the earth.*

It is a catching virtue, is this loyalty, when genuine. It works by infection. Though the modern world has inoculated itself with certain contrarious shibboleths and principles against the possibility of contagion, one nevertheless meets with stirring instances of it now and then. When our own country was passing through the crisis of the Civil War, Providence raised up a leader of the nation who seemed to have in a remarkable degree the capacity for inspiring in his own person devotion to the cause he stood for. He had many faults, doubtless; but on the great issues his was a metal that rang true. The people grew to trust him, and trust passed into love. When he was slain, they made a martyr of him; and love that had often criticised in his life-time became exultant, almost unreasoning, in its worship after his death. He had broken the shackles of a bond-race; he had stood firm when weaker men lost their heads; he had saved the Union. Even the children of his opposers are loyal to his memory to-day.

Only a little while ago a great Queen passed to her account. For more than sixty years she had been the ruler over a sixth part of the inhabitants of the earth. She was good and pure; she tried honestly, so far as she was able, to make her reign beneficent. Millions upon millions were loyal to her, and did homage to her name in death. Some time before, when her ministers decided, doubtless for their own political ends, to hold a jubilee in honor of her sixty years of royal dominion, all the world was invited to applaud her and *sing with the voice of triumph.* Kings and emperors, and the ambassadors of sovereign peoples, princes and tributary rulers, assembled from every corner of the globe to do her reverence. Even the Holy Father sent a special legate to represent him in the great procession that marched before her. It was a wonderful spectacle, and those who saw it are not likely ever to ignore its lesson. Millions of her citizen-subjects lined the pavement as the concourse moved by; and when her carriage appeared they *clapped their hands, they shouted out in ringing tones.* It was a veritable cry of triumph, such as is heard but once in a thousand years on this disappointing earth. Those who heard it say they will never forget it. It was like the roar of many waters. It cowed one, even while it made the blood tingle, and the heart beat fast, and the tears start to the eyes, that one good woman could inspire all that pomp and swell those myriad throats with praise. That was true loyalty. Do we Catholics feel as much for Christ the King? Yet His Jubilee is every

day when the Mass-bell rings in warning, and the priest, amid a silence more impressive than the *voice of exultation,* lifts that secret Body up that faith may see and worship it. *O all ye peoples, clap your hands; for the Lord most high is awful: Jesus, the Son of Mary, is the "Great King" over all the earth.*

The "Great King" over all the earth: It would seem to be the meaning of the liturgy that that kingship is shown most wonderfully in Our Lord's Providence. *It never fails,* says the collect in the Mass-Book, it never fails in the arrangements it contrives in life. That is a thought to encourage, but it is also a thought to inspire fear. *The Lord most high is awful.* What the old Greek recognized as Necessity, the blind Force to which even Zeus was subject, we Catholics recognize as the Providence of God, the Providence of the Word over the realm of souls whereof He, the Divine Reason, ought of right to be King.

What a meaningless blank is human history when read without faith! "Frame-work that waits for a picture to frame!" But Christ Our Lord is the meaning. He is the soul of all history; His invisible and interior Church is the real battle-field of all the right and wrong, all the folly and wisdom that are at war upon this earth, even as His visible Kingdom, our own hierarchical mother, the One Church Catholic, that perpetuates His great victory on the Cross in the daily mystery of the Mass, is

the abiding City of Contention to all the great ones of the world, kings or emperors or peoples, who would cast off His law. *I am come not to bring peace, but a sword!* Like her Lord and Head she is a Rock of Offence to many; but on whomsoever she falls he shall be ground to powder. The history of the Papacy bears out that prediction. *For the Lord most high is awful; He is the Great King*, greater than any that Assyria ever knew; His Kingship is felt *over all the earth*, while He lies hidden and silent, perhaps even mishandled and misprized, upon the altars of His Church.

The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm xlvii, 10, 11 and 12.
EPISTLE: Romans, viii, 12-18.
GOSPEL: S. Luke, xvi, 1-10.

Introitus: Suscepimus, Deus, misericordiam tuam in medio templi tui: secundum nomen tuum, Deus, ita et laus tua in fines terræ: justitia plena est dextera tua.

Magnus Dominus, et laudabilis nimis: in civitate Dei nostri, in monte sancto ejus.

The Entrance Versicle: *We have had proof, O God, of Thy loving-kindness in the midst of Thy temple: As is Thy Name, O God, so is Thy praise unto the ends of the earth: With righteousness is Thy right hand full.*

Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised: In the City of Our God, on the Mountain of His Holiness.

WE have had proof, we have known and felt Thy loving-kindness: It is possible to think well of this world and it is possible to think evil. The wider view, which is also the oldest, pronounces it good. It contains many wonderful things that move before the eye of the true beholder, like the scenes painted by the genius of Polygnotus in the Pœcile at Athens. Faith gazes at it

and finds it a conglomerate of many colors, changeable, various, intricate, manifold; but out of the press and tangle of all these struggling figures, victory emerges at the end; and the victory is God's. His care is over all His creation; His Providence fails not. That was how the Psalmist looked at life. He saw God reigning over the heathen, God sitting upon the throne of His holiness.

> The princes of the peoples are gathered together,—
> Together with the people of the God of Abraham;
> For the shields of the earth belong unto God;
> He is greatly exalted.

And so he invites us to praise Jehovah, *with understanding*, to sing unto Him *in a skilful psalm*, for *He is greatly to be praised, in the City of our God, even on His holy Mountain.* Surely the sight of the world would not beget such thoughts in the hearts of the wise, unless there were some evidence in it of a guiding Mind.

That life and history should take on an element of divinity in the eyes of a Catholic is inspiring enough; but what shall we say of them as modified by the thought of the daily Mass? If the unexpected triumph of good over evil, and the reflection that God can fulfil Himself in many ways, are evidence that the divine concern is busy in our regard, this gift of His bounty is proof of something incomparably greater still. It is His mercy made visible and palpable. It seems to hold everything, because, in giving it to us, He tried to empty the Treas-

ure House of His Heart. "Infinite riches in a little room!" He gave us much—more than we can ever sufficiently thank Him for in heaven—when He became Man; but how were His tendernesses multiplied when He became our food! He taught us to say: *Give us this day our supersubstantial bread,* and how He answers that strange petition! The gift of a little bread and a little wine is laid upon His altar, and faith discovers that *His Flesh is meat indeed and His Blood is drink indeed.*

The gift ever betrays the giver; and *from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof* this is the supreme Gift that proves Jehovah great—great in Israel, *great among the Gentiles,* because, *in the midst of His Temple, we have known that holiest attribute* of His goodness which the Psalmist calls *Hesed—His loving-kindness or piety which is to us-ward,* a kind of divinely ineffectual yearning that pours itself out on man's unworthiness until God Himself has all but ceased to be. He hath emptied Himself—*exinanivit se;* and *of His fulness have we all received.* This is the true *pleroma* whereof St. Paul speaks. By this Bread are we filled daily *with all the fulness of God.* We may not hope to understand it, for the Apostle reminds us that *it passeth knowledge.* We can only say that the "love of Christ" has passed into us *substantially,* and we can praise Him for it in that passionate doxology wherein St. Paul uses words not radically dissimilar from those of to-day's Introit: *Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abun-*

dantly above all that we ask or think, according to the Power that worketh in us—unto Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever. Amen.

Thy loving-kindness: Hesed, which the Vulgate has rendered by *misericordia* (mercy, or tender-heartedness), would seem in its original sense in the ancient Israelitic mind to stand for something sweeter and more robust. It is really an expression for the *divine piety* perpetually occupying its thought with the needs of the children of earth, and more especially of its chosen ones. All the virile graciousness and strength of fatherhood, all the pathetic hunger and anxiety of motherhood, are summed up in its two brief syllables. We have called it *loving-kindness* because the word has a recognized and almost technical signification in our English tongue; and because it belongs to all English-speaking Catholics not to ignore a phrase which may enable them to realize better the depth and insight of the things which have been *written for their instruction,* and which constitute the very fibre of the Church's liturgy. Yet *loving-kindness* is an inadequate translation.

In God there is an interior *Hesed* as well as an exterior. By the one we are enabled, as in a parable, to touch darkly on the Holy Trinity; by the other we are stimulated to weigh with the heart the benefit of creation and the overpassing mercy of our Redemption in Christ. That eternal brooding and quasi-sense of mystery, the

thought, in a word, by which the Father begets the Son, and that further act of mutual love and knowledge by which Father and Son together become the Principle of the Holy Ghost, are really the divine originals of that other outpouring of the uncreated Goodness which spends Itself in the world of human souls. It is this second form of God's *loving-kindness* which gave us the Incarnation, making Our Lady's pure womb the Bridal Chamber from which Love was to issue forth, fashioning Our Lord's human nature so marvellously that He alone, and of His own right, could be called the Fairest of the Sons of Men, establishing for us a mystical counterpart of His perfect Body and calling it the elect Church, wherein, as in a temple, we were to sit down at His table and have proof of His tender-heartedness in the Seven Sacraments, and most of all in this holiest and greatest Sacrament, round which the poetry and pathos of the Mass have grown up through the centuries. *We have had proof, we have known and felt, and pondered on it*—the word which has been rendered by *suscepimus* means all that—*we have had proof of Thy loving-kindness in the midst of Thy temple; and the evidence of it is renewed every day when we hear Mass.* Oh, how wonderful is the simplest and most elementary Catholic teaching! How eloquent with divine poetry the ritual of our Office! How charged with mystery the commonest act of our religious lives! And yet some speak contemptuously of us as though we were out of date; they deride our ordinances as though they were fond

things vainly conceived; they turn away from our theology, as though it were a fossilized forest buried beneath the dust and detritus of the ages. Pray to-day that the Church be better known; pray that all who handle these mysteries may understand.

With righteousness is Thy right hand full: God gives grace abundantly at all times. He maketh His rain to fall on the just and on the unjust. But what was promised darkly to Moses and the prophets has been realized openly in the New Dispensation.

And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto My commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give you the rain of your land in due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn and the wine of thine oil.

There is a former rain and a latter: He gave us His grace in measure when we were baptized. That was when the "ground was iron" and nights were very frosty. We made a beginning in Christ; and it was the month *Ethanim* of the older and unregenerate life; but the *latter rain*, the rain that comes when the barley ripens, He gives us in His Mass. St. Teresa used to say that one worthy Communion was more than sufficient to lift one to sanctity. And why not? Do we not come close to Substantial Holiness Itself? Do we not take it into our own hearts? Do we not, as some of the

Fathers dare to put it, "become bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh?" This is the *righteousness wherewith His Right Hand is full;* for the Word, even Christ, is the Right Hand and Power of the Father; and it is by His Righteousness, which we receive in awful reality, not having it coldly imputed to us by a fiction unworthy of the divine Wisdom, that we are saved and made like to the Son. It is good to pray earnestly at all times; but there is no time of prayer like the time between the Consecration and the Communion of the Mass. *Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; in that City of Our Lord, which is our own Church Catholic, on the Mountain of His Holiness, which is none other than the Altar, on which we behold Him lifted up!*

The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm liii, 6, 7 and 3.
EPISTLE: 1 Corinthians, x, 6-13.
GOSPEL: S. Luke, xix, 41-47.

Introitus: Ecce Deus adjuvat me, et Dominus susceptor est animæ meæ: averte mala inimicis meis, et in veritate tua disperde illos, protector meus, Domine.

Deus in nomine tuo salvum me fac: et in virtute tua libera me.

The Entrance Versicle: *Behold, God is my Helper, even Jehovah is the Upholder of my soul: Oh, ward off evils unto mine enemies, and in Thy truthfulness rout them utterly, O Lord, my Protector.*

Save me, O God, for Thy Name's sake, and in Thy power set me free.

BEHOLD, God is my Helper, even Jehovah is the Upholder of my soul: What Our Blessed Lord desired to be to the unbelieving city that rejected Him, that does He become to every faithful soul that draws near to Him in the Sacrifice of the Mass. He is a Helper, a

strong Upholder. We are beset by enemies round about us on every side. There is the flesh and its lusts. Through all the most precious years of life, the years wherein we slowly build up character, who, born of woman, escapes its buffeting? Then there is the world and its false pomps, well typified by Babylon, *that great city* that the lords of show have *built for the kingdom by the might of their power, and for the honor of their majesty.* Does it not fascinate, as its horses and riders go sweeping by? Who has not been stirred by the bravery of its great captains and the splendor of their achievements? It seems almost a proof of a mean spirit in us not to admire them.

> O Lord, to me the pageant is entrancing—
> This march of States and Kings!
> I keenly watch the human race advancing,
> And see Man master things.

Oh, it is no sin to feel the pride of all that, pulsing like a fever in the blood; but if we yield to it we are lost to Christ. Our triumphs are to be elsewhere. And, last of all, there is the Arch-Fiend, Satan, our ancient enemy, with all his busy cohorts of angels. It is he whom we need most to fear; for he has power, if we surrender our wills to him, *to destroy body and soul in hell.*

Even the most lukewarm learn to be on their guard against the flesh. Public opinion, aided by an austere kind of knowledge, teaches them, almost before they have

learned to discern wisely between good and evil, that there must be no parleying with that enemy in the gates. The world, too, is fairly understood by well-instructed Catholics. They may yield for a while to the glamour of its daily victories; but they know in their hearts they cannot afford to pay it undivided allegiance. They dare not wear its livery or learn its shibboleths altogether; for they have heard it condemned. Our Lord would not pray for it; and His chosen disciple, who seems to have had the tenderest heart of all the twelve, says rather bitterly of it that *it lieth wholly in wickedness—in maligno positus est.* It has been suggested,—the interpretation of many Fathers bears out the view—that the phrase really means *the whole world lieth in the power of the Evil One.* That brings us to a deeper thought that lurks beneath this morning's Introit.

Ah, ward off evils unto mine enemies: The Jews of Our Lord's day believed firmly in the existence of the "Devil and his Angels." The later writings of the Old Testament contain much that is instructive on that topic; but for us Catholics it is to the New Testament that we must go if we wish to learn the ways of the *Strong One Armed.* From the sixty odd references to him scattered up and down the inspired pages, we gather that Satan is a living principle of evil, crafty, intelligent, resourceful, panoplied with power, a person, in fine, with whom every follower of Our Lord will have to deal. Before the Incarnation he seems to have enjoyed a certain range of do-

minion over the physical world, to have shared the desert and " waste places " with the wild beasts, and to have been allowed even to work his will over men's bodies by means of his satellites, whose name and number were legion. The visible " sign " Our Lord gave, that the kingdom of God was indeed come upon earth, consisted chiefly in the check His mere word laid upon this occult physical influence. The meaning of this fact was vividly apprehended by the early Christians, as was also the more bewildering truth that, until the last day, when *death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death, Satan will be permitted to deceive the nations, and to go up and down the breadth of the earth, and to compass the camp of the saints about, and even to engirdle the beloved city.*

In Thy truthfulness rout them utterly, O Jehovah, my Protector: It is one of the worst signs of the general enfeeblement of faith in these days that so many Catholics ignore the Devil's existence altogether, forgetting that he is an " influence " to be reckoned with constantly in their lives. Sermons that deal with him are not popular; treatises that put us on our guard against his wiles are set aside as old-fashioned; or, if they are read at all, it is for their " quaintness," their " mediævalism." The liturgical prayers with which faith once armed itself against his attacks are seldom published now. It is feared that they may be misunderstood by the "outsider" forsooth! And yet the Church warns us nightly in her

Compline prayer that we must be sober and must watch; *for he goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.* Do we resist him, *strong in faith?*

The Devil is in the world still, a *spirit of wickedness in high places,* a true *prince of the power of the air.* Who is it that creates that atmosphere of un-Catholic opinion that blights the purest thoughts of the heart? Who is it that sows the cockle in the wheat in such abundance that one may well fear whether there shall be sound grain to gather in, when the Lord of the Harvest appears? Cockle in the vast open field of the visible Church, murmurs, intrigues, discontent, contemptible ambitions, open disaffection, disloyalty to Peter's See, race-rancors, ignorance of the " things that are more excellent," schisms, perhaps worse—is it human malice alone, or human folly alone, that will account for the ever-increasing tale of offences that from age to age makes our Mother come short in her reckoning? Cockle in the enclosed field of the individual heart, weariness in right-doing, a chafing under the yoke that is never light unless charity be strong, disgust of the service that once pleased, hungering for the lentils of Egypt, unavowed admiration of the world, plausible sophistries of lust, leasing, chicanery, petty subterfuge, smouldering ill-will, conceit, hard-heartedness, insincerity, the slow rust and mildew that accretes to the perfect image of Christ impressed upon the soul in Baptism, then the first critical step and subsequent emergence upon the broad road that

leads to destruction—how are we to explain that subtle process of deterioration if there be no evil spirit, with his seven worse than himself, to enter into the heart that the Word has swept and garnished? As surely as this Power of ill wrought havoc in the soul of Saul and entered into the heart of Judas Iscariot, so surely must all who are signed and sealed unto Salvation wage a daily warfare against his wiles. *Be ye prudent as serpents,* says Our Lord to His own; for He knows we have to do with the Old Serpent, who has lost nothing of his cunning.

Save me, O Lord, for Thy Name's sake, and in Thy Power set me free: In one of those bold thought-pictures, or devout meditations, for which the genius of St. Ignatius of Loyola is remarkable, we have a graphic description of the way in which Christ, the Power of God, sets us free. *He delivers us by His truth.* In the *Meditation for the Fourth Day of the Second Week* the Hidalgo Saint asks us to think well on "Two Standards"—*de dos Banderas*—the Standard of our Captain Christ and the Standard of Lucifer, the Arch Enemy of the human race. Perhaps the most disturbing thing in that meditation is the thought of the great industry of Satan. "Consider in the second place," says the Saint,

how he summons a parliament of innumerable demons, and how he scatters them, some into one city, others into another, and so on through the entire world, neglecting neither province, nor place, nor estate or condition of men, no, not even the most insignificant persons, however private and withdrawn.

These emissaries of the Evil One are to work ruin chiefly by employing the good things of this world to deceive, the things that strike the eye and make men's persons pleasant to behold, riches, honors, and the pride of life. But, for every secret agent of Lucifer there is another who pleads for Christ. There are the angels, who are His servants and messengers, and the apostles and all just men whom He calls His friends. He leaves no soul out of the range of His propaganda. He tells each child of Adam through His Church, or in more secret and uncovenanted ways, the " good-tidings " which were of old, the emancipation which is found only in Himself. He bids them be poor in spirit, and lowly in heart, He bids them learn of Him in all things. *He is the Way, the Truth, the Life; His truth sets them free.*

Try to hear Mass to-day with these thoughts uppermost in the heart. Pray to be upheld amidst the lusts and discouragements that St. Paul enumerates in the Epistle; so shall you be saved from an overthrow more terrible than that which overtook the earthly Jerusalem.

The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Introit: Psalm liiii, 19-20; 23 and 1.
Epistle: 1 Corinthians xii, 2-11.
Gospel: S. Luke xviii, 9-14.

Introitus: Cum clamarem ad Dominum, exaudivit vocem meam, ab his, qui appropinquant mihi; et humiliavit eos qui est ante sæcula et manet in æternum: jacta cogitatum tuum in Domino et ipse te enutriet.

Exaudi, Deus, orationem meam, et ne despexeris deprecationem meam. Intende mihi et exaudi me.*

The Entrance Versicle: *When I cried aloud to the Lord, He heard my prayer: (He delivered me) from them that draw nigh (to attack me): The Ancient of Days, He that abides forever, hath brought them low: Cast thy thought upon the Lord, and He Himself shall feed thee.*

Hear my prayer, O God, and make not light of my entreaty: Stoop Thou unto me and listen.

* The reading of the Vulgate differs notably from these words as they appear in the Roman Missal. St. Jerome's own rendering and the later Greek versions are also at variance. We have endeavored to give an adequate sense to the detached and broken phrases as they stand in the sentences of the Introit. The sources of the Scriptural quotations in the modern liturgy are to be found in the *Versio Itala.*

WHEN I cried aloud to the Lord, He heard my prayer: Our Lord condemns tedious and ostentatious prayer; He does not condemn the prayer that is oft-repeated, insistent and loud. The unseasonable friend who knocks during sleep time is sometimes heard, as we are reminded in the parable, merely because he is importunate and will not be denied. But with the petition of the Pharisee the case is different. Far up in Heaven God hears that prayer as a cry of sham neediness to be ignored in silence, or answered with mockery. The " many words " leave Him cold and unmoved. Through the brave show of eloquence He detects the untruth that lies at the core of all its self-righteousness, and He turns away from it in displeasure, as a man might turn away from the sudden unbared sight of a toad found lurking in the heart of a stone. How can the divine truth have comfort in the ugliness of a lie? The soul that bases its claim to be heard on the plea that it *is not as other men* is offering a lie to the Lord.

By one of those divine paradoxes that meet us constantly in the liturgy of the Church, we learn to-day that the loud cry of the Psalmist does not differ from the lowlier, half-smothered sob of the publican who stood afar off and said: *Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.* Both forms of entreaty are akin. Indeed, the voice of him *who stands afar off* is, if anything, louder in the ears of God, Who listens always when we fear to draw nigh. The heart cries aloud, when it is emptied of the din of the

world; its still small voice is as the roar of many waters, when it is made void of the tumult and debate of its own lusts. When the strife of our many lower selves has ceased, and the rule of the parliament of the passions is over, then the will and the conscience are enthroned once more, and God begins to reign. He hears the heart's loud prayer, when the enemy draws nigh. He answers it and delivers.

He delivers me from them that draw nigh to attack me: It is one of the melancholy commonplaces of spiritual experience that every lapse of the soul is preceded by a silence. The devil first makes us sullen and mute; then he draws nigh and works his will. *Watch ye and pray,* says Our Lord. Scripture is full of examples; each century of ecclesiastical history is full of examples; every chapter in our own individual past has its parable in illustration. Have we ever fallen in the face of *them that draw nigh* when the heart cried aloud to Jehovah? Any form of prayer is good, when the trial is on; but no form of prayer may be likened to the prayer of the Mass. Try to accustom the soul to look to that source of strength daily, when difficulties have to be faced. If you cannot be present in person, endeavor to have a Mass offered for your needs. It is the joint *prayer of sacrifice* which the whole elect people of God offers each morning before the Tabernacle. There are the sons of Israel sprinkled with the Blood of the New Covenant. Calvary is enacted over and over again. The actors and the

scene are different; but the great Protagonist, Who is both Priest and Victim, is the same. If Our Lord's pleading was with efficacy, when He hung upon the Cross, it is not less mighty here. It is the same identical Word of Entreaty. Indeed, it is the Word Himself Who becomes an Incarnate Prayer; and He is heard for the respect He bore His Father during the hours of His Passion. He is listened to because of His obedience—*exauditus est pro reverentia sua.* We Catholics wisely make much of the Mass as an instrument of mercy in behalf of the faithful dead; but there are too many among us who ignore its power as an instrument of blessing unto the living. There are certain demons that are never cast out save by prayer and fasting. For such grievous case the Mass is the supreme prayer, and that austere sobriety of living to which frequent Communion compels us, is the most acceptable form of fasting. It is by these engines *He delivers us from them that draw nigh to lay snares for the soul.*

The Ancient of Days, He that abideth forever: Nearly all unbelievers, many honest Protestants, and more Catholics than ought to be the case, considering the amount of easily accessible teaching on the subject, misread and misinterpret the Scriptural metaphysic of prayer. We have a glimpse of the Church's view in the awful words of the Introit: *The Ancient of Days, He that abideth forever.* He it is Who hears us and brings down the pride of them that labor for our overthrow. *God is*

not a man that it should repent Him. When He listens to us *for that reverence sake* which we acquire by being made one with His Son in Baptism, and by sharing in a still more wonderful unity in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, He does not change, even though the order of the visible world about us seems to suffer mutation. Yesterday, to-day and forever, He alters not. The hairs of our head are counted; not a sparrow falls but He has willed it; He has ordered all things in number, weight and measure. If the inexorable sequence of cause and effect in the physical universe is part of His divine plan, so are the apparent exceptions which He has foreseen and decreed from the beginning. Not every answer to human prayer is a miracle; though miracles are not beyond the scope of His wider and more fatherly providence. He is the Ancient of Days; He abides forever. That terrible thought, which was so familiar to St. Augustine, about the " uncounted victorious graces " He holds for each child of Adam in the hollow of His hand, finds its counterpart in the infinite dispositions of His diurnal government of the world. He allows it to spin along its allotted grooves of law, but the range of its energies is not final. In extreme cases He appears to intervene; not because there is room for after-wisdom in the divine mind, but because we who note the wonder are limited in vision, and see but a pigmy's fraction of the whole. His eternities are translated into our understandings as hours and seasons, with here and there an inexplicable change. Even where He does not interfere

directly we believe that His will has been at work. In the order of divine intentions the physical world was not planned quite so independently of the world of grace as science seems to assume. The last day will make that abundantly evident. Not the least of the surprises held in reserve for Jehoshaphat, that Valley of Judgment wherein we shall stand, will come from the confounding vision of the great white throne, and the conviction it will engender that His ways were always " just and justifiable to men."

Cast thy thought upon the Lord, and He Himself shall feed thee: Many pray; but their thought, their care, is not cast primarily and unreservedly upon Jehovah. They keep a firm hold on other considerations as well. They look to friends, to wealth, to chance or fortune, to their own patient shrewdness. They leave no stone unturned, they say; and their recourse to heaven is only one of many varieties of self-seeking. For such souls prayer is indeed a vain superstition, and God a kind of spiritual fetich. Until we learn that trust is the very be-all and end-all of the true petitioner, and that without it the most sacred words are a mockery, we have not grasped the full sense of the injunction to cast our burden upon the Lord. It is as though we should expect an eagle to fly far and fast after we had drawn the shoulder-pinions of its wings. All faith begins in a surrender of the heart and ends in an interchange of needs, of habitual aspirations and secrets. It is the unreserved outgo-

ing of one personality to another. Deep calls to deep until the waters mingle. The dykes of self are broken down, and one life of mutual understanding flows full and clear between two separate souls. That sounds very much like a description of love; and, in a sense, the remark is to the point. "What else is charity," asks St. Augustine, "but faith made perfect?" Some original smallness dies within us each time that we trust another. We grow from more to more and flourish with newer life. *What man by taking thought,* says Our Blessed Lord, *can add one cubit to his stature?* And we answer with this paradox of to-day's Introit: *The man that casts his thought upon the Lord, and seeks Him daily in the Mass, he shall add cubits to his stature; for God Himself shall feed Him, and he shall grow up to the height and might and mystery of Christ.* Oh, if all those who hurry forth from their homes each Sunday morning to fulfil Our Lord's commandment by a devout hearing of the Holy Mass would but carry that conviction like a seed of fruitfulness in the heart, how would the Church be multiplied in an unbelieving land!

The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm lxvii, 6, 7, 36 and 1.
EPISTLE: 1 Corinthians xv, 1-10.
GOSPEL: S. Mark vii, 31-37.

Introitus: Deus in loco sancto suo: Deus qui inhabitare facit unanimes in domo: ipse dabit virtutem et fortudinem plebi suæ.

Exsurgat Deus, et dissipentur inimici ejus: et fugiant, qui oderunt eum, a facie ejus.

The Entrance Versicle: *God Who sitteth in His holy place, God Who maketh them that are of one mind to dwell together in His house, He shall give strength and courage to His people.*

Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered: Let them also that hate Him flee from before His face.

GOD is in His holy place: The thought of the divine omnipresence is at once a stimulus and a sedative to a certain order of religious soul. *To realize* that God is everywhere, *and not merely to acquiesce* in that fundamental truth, as in a sort of metaphysical consequence of the absolute nature of Deity, is to arm oneself from the

start with one of the surest safeguards of the spiritual life. It is to make the Scriptural injunction to walk before Jehovah and be perfect somewhat easier of fulfilment than many an indefatigable toiler discovers it to be. This explains, perhaps, how it comes about that the few who lay this ancient rule of conduct vitally to heart are prone to a curious and inconsequent jealousy of more practical precepts. To live, to move, to have one's being in the unchangeable Righteousness, to know that It does not dwell far off from any one of us, but is nearer and more intimate than the secret and self-scrutinizing conscience can ever be to its own undisguised and candid self, is one of those principles of discreet asceticism that are of instant and universal application. It appeals alike to Jew and to Gentile.

No wonder that St. Paul made its persuasive obviousness the rhetorical bait wherewith he essayed to capture the cultivated Hellenic mind. He Who made us, and Who is Himself not made, is everywhere. We cannot escape Him. Though our bed be laid in Sheol, He is there. Though we fly away on wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there is His right hand stretched out to seize us. His mercies are not abated; and His judgments, whether they slay or save, are, like Himself, a great Deep. There are many to whom this thought is so familiar that they have little feeling for kindlier and more human considerations of God. The abasement of the Incarnation, for instance, does not greatly stir them. They believe and glory in

every truth connected with that consoling Mystery; but it offers them no clew. It is only a further and palpable evidence for what faith dreamed of vaguely from the foundation of the world. Their instinct still carries them to those high places—*in excelsis*, as the Mass hymn reminds them daily—whence that Theophany first emerged as a beam in our lower darkness. Their "conversation," their life's business, is with the angels; and, like these blessed spirits, they find, not the divine footsteps merely, but His very Presence, everywhere. They praise Him *because of that great glory*, their piety hardly appearing to reach out to the many-sided charm of Our Blessed Lord's human nature, but losing itself rather in an excess of light and omnipotence that shines upon the world because the Son of God is in the midst of it as *in a holy place*. Wherever the dawn breaks His Mass is offered day by day; from one sunrise to another the earth is girdled with an exceeding precious zone of righteousness. The cloud fills all the Temple; the Word is in the midst of it; *God is in His holy place*.

God is in His holy place: The thought of the Real Presence engendered by the Mass ought not to weaken the lesson taught us by the divine ubiquity. Can we come nearer to God, nearer to His essence, nearer to His power, than we have come by the mere fact of existence? When He fashioned things in the beginning He did not leave them to themselves. When He created each separate soul to be the body's particular and fiery principle of life,

He did not toss it out carelessly into the dark, nor leave it entirely to the influence of impersonal force. Even after He makes us He holds us in the hollow of His hand, and breathes with us in every breath we take; each several deed of our doing belongs primarily to Him in the order of causation; and it is by His minute and infinitesimal concurrence alone that creaturely activity is thinkable in an otherwise inert world. Can we come nearer to Him, then, by any new Epiphany of His wisdom or of His love? The Blessed Eucharist is the answer to that question. In the measure in which the Incarnation has brought us closer to the intimacies of the Sacred Triad by lifting us to a plane of being undreamed of even by the angels before it was revealed on that first starry morning of young Time, when Lucifer fell, and the children of Adam were pre-ordained to succeed to his forfeited episcopate, in that measure were we still further ennobled when, on the night of His passion, Our Lord took bread, and blessed it, saying: *This is my Body.* We are fearfully close to God wherever we fare throughout His creation, for in Him we live and move; we are doubly closer to Him by our faith and Baptism in Christ, for in His manhood we live and move not less truly, as we shall understand at length when we behold some day in heaven how mysteriously His Seven Sacraments have operated on earth; but we are closest of all to Him in the Communion of the unbloody Sacrifice. When we have partaken of that table He lives and moves and has His being in us. The very Body that was broken for love of our unrequiting

hearts, the very Blood that was poured out to make us clean of all transgression, the entire Christ, is ours and we are His. It is as though God were All in All before that appointed consummation whereof the Apostle writes. We are sanctified by this mysterious union. *Jehovah is in His holy place.*

God Who maketh them that are of one mind to dwell together in His house, He shall give strength and courage to His people: Without stopping to enquire the full sense of the perplexing original text of these words, it is enough for us to know how the liturgical instinct of generations of the faithful has adapted them to a deep dogmatic significance. *The Blessed Sacrament is the living principle of interior union in the Church of Christ.* It is the mystical Bond of Brotherhood by which true discipleship may be tested always. By this inner Mystery, by this daily repeated Rite wherein we dispense the Food which can never be given to the *dogs and sorcerers that are without,* we show forth in a seemly way Our Lord's death until He come. It is the secret inward grace of the New Testament answering wondrously to the outward hierarchic system of the Kingdom of God on earth, its changing formularies of an unchanging creed, and all that pomp and circumstance of ritual which we associate rightly with the One, Holy, Roman, Catholic and Apostolic Church. It is by the Mass that we live and are made to be of one mind, dwelling together in the House of Jehovah. It is in the " act of communicating "

that the Lord of the holier Covenant gives strength and courage to His people. *The Bread that we break, is it not the communion of the Body of Christ? And the cup that we bless, is it not the communion of the Blood of Christ? For we all, being many, are One Bread, all we that partake of that Bread.* This thought should help us to cultivate a practical and living sympathy with the Church's legislation on the subject of the Mass. A sullen and half-hearted acquiescence in these things betrays coldness of faith or ignorance, which is the pitiless slow solvent of faith not less inevitably than the pride of secular knowledge.

Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered; let them also that hate Him flee from before His face: We shall never know until God makes all things plain in the Resurrection how much the daily Sacrifice of the Mass has contributed to the Apostolate of the Church. The Kingdom of God grows as a tree grows. The vigor of its inward life exerts itself by absorption and assimilation. The salts and juices of the earth, the gases of the air that lie within the sphere of its activities, obey the summons of the life-former within. That is one figure, and we owe the lesson it conveys to a parable of Our Lord. We always think of the Church as *the greatest of all trees,* and its *leaves are for the healing of the nations.* In that divine similitude we know where the Mass comes; but we have another inconceivably more striking. Our Lord used the prophecy of His own Cru-

cifixion as a parable of His ultimate triumph over an unbelieving world. *And I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all things to Myself.* He is lifted up still on the altars of His Church. May we not believe that the strange curtailment of Satan's former power over the sons of men is due to that hourly exaltation?

The unseen hosts are still mighty, as we know to our sorrow; but they shall be scattered at last, they shall flee from before His human face, veiled, yet seen by them that believe and tremble, when the last Mass shall have been offered up, and a sign shall appear in the heavens, and the First of the Sons of Men shall present *a perfect people* and a completed Church to His Father.

The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Introit: Psalm lxix, 2, 3.
Epistle: 2 Corinthians iii, 4-9.
Gospel: S. Luke x, 23-37.

Introitus: Deus, in adjutorium meum intende: Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina: confundantur et revereantur inimici mei, qui quærunt animam meam.

Avertantur retrorsum et erubescant qui cogitant mihi mala.

The Entrance Versicle: *Come Thou to mine aid, O God: Make haste, O Lord, to help me: Let them be confounded and filled with fear, the enemies that seek after my soul.*

Let them be turned backward and put to shame that desire my hurt.

COME Thou to mine aid, O God: Make haste, O Lord, to help me: Few phrases in the psalms have so fascinated the imagination of the Church as this cry for divine succor. Everywhere, indeed, and at all seasons, the true believer feels the need of God; but at no time is his helplessness more pressing that when he leaves the world's

business and turns for a space to prayer. An Apostle reminds us that we cannot so much as pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus with power save by the favor of that Spirit through Whom we believe in the Same and are made His brothers and co-heirs in glory. It is the adoption of sonship that gives us the right as well as the inspiration to say: Abba, Father. That is our privilege in the household of faith; and we make use of it each time that we recite the Lord's Prayer with conviction. But, to acquire an habitual insight into the hidden mystery of the homely word by which we address Him, the Father Himself must stoop from the divine mercy-seat, which is the glorified human nature of His Son, and come to our aid; *He must make haste to help us.*

Accident, no doubt, will account for a good deal of the theological poetry and beauty of the words of public worship. The instinct of all devout believers, or *sensus fidelium*, as we call it, will account for much more. Yet when one reflects on God's jealous care of His kingdom on earth, when one remembers the bold similitudes in which that creation of His later and more particular providence over mankind is set forth in Scripture, he finds it difficult to concede that so important and vital a thing as the liturgy of any great branch of Christendom should be wholly the fortuitous outcome of human activity. The mind that beholds God working in the midst of His world—*My Father worketh hitherto, and I also work*—has little belief in chance. Our Lord still

does all things well, because the Father *has ordered them well.* This seems to be as true, in a large and general way, of the Roman Breviary and Mass Book as it is of any other ordinance by which the divine assistance is ensured to an indefectible Church. Slowly, but surely, through the centuries, the formularies, the discipline, the local peculiarities of external service, the rites and offices of the Latin obedience have prevailed over other usages in the West until the Roman law of prayer has come, with befitting safeguards and reservations, to be accounted a kind of informal law of orthodox belief. *Lex orandi lex credendi,* we say; and the test is a sound one. By prefixing that pathetic entreaty of to-day's Introit to each several "hour" of her daily psalmody the Latin Church has emphasized the helplessness of the purest and most spiritual heart before God in prayer. Unless the Lord build that city of the soul, which faith always dreams of erecting when the "habit of prayer" is sincerely cultivated, and which, like that *other city, the Jerusalem which is from above,* is always *full of the presence of the Lord,* as a lamp-lit room is full of light, the wit, the imagination, the memory and senses of the natural man labor in vain to erect it. *Come Thou to mine aid, O God: Make haste, O Lord, to help me!*

It is not by novelty or pomp of phrase, not by fresh device or invention, not by new "manuals of devotion," or by mysterious "methods" and acquired "states" that the habit of prayer is learned. No true disciple,

no saint least of all, will presume to lay down laws for the Holy Ghost. His way is as the wind's way—*spiritus ubi vult spirat*—and He gives His better gifts, of which prayer is one, to whom He will. In this matter we must all be *taught of God* or remain forever dumb. *He must come to our aid; He must make haste to help.* What a living commentary on that baffling truth the careers of the great contemplatives afford! But they do not stand alone. The cloister gate is not the sole entrance to the enclosed garden of the Lord. Many an obscure life apparently immersed in secular pursuits is full of surprises to the angels who read of such secrets in the unbared splendor of Him Who is described as *sitting throned forever upon the praises of Israel.*

Let them be confounded and filled with fear, the enemies that seek after my soul: We have already dwelt on the machinations of the Evil One. He is the great Sifter of the human heart. *Simon, Simon, Satan hath sought to have thee that he might sift thee like wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.* That God should permit such a state of trial is a mystery hard to be understood, until we recall how frequently Jehovah is described in Holy Writ as the Strong One in love with character. The struggle that went on in heaven must be re-enacted on earth. We must all rise to the great Archangel's stature; we must prove, each in his calling and degree, that there is nobody like God. For each one of us there will be silence in heaven until the battle is fought

and won. We win in this warfare by faith; but not by faith alone. The Word prays for us; He arms us with His own strength. He fortifies us with food and drink. He invites us to sit down daily at meat in the House which He, the Eternal Wisdom, has prepared for us. And He is constrained thereto by a sort of necessity, seeing that we must each give battle to one "who is terrible in wiles."

Let them be confounded and filled with fear: . . . Let them be turned backward and put to shame: One of the soberest lessons that life teaches the few who think is that good and evil must be forever at war. That is the tedious and unchanging burden of the scribe of outer history. We listen to it and grow steadfast or despondent, according to our outlook and the robustness of our faith. And what goes on with vast pageantry in the world without is but the gigantic mimickry and parable of a struggle with which we are always familiar within. The unseen scribe of the chronicle that rarely finds more than two readers, God and the disillusioned heart, has the same message to deliver. There is the law of our members and the law of our mind; and the two are never in complete adjustment. Because they are contrary we must struggle down to the end. We must face *them that desire our hurt.* But the Mystery that the Mass renews daily is the highest and most infallible source of our strength. Even if we do not communicate, we gain enormously by going to take part in that august Sacrifice. We shall

go forth from the awful Memorial—which still, as we believe, contains the Reality—breathing a courage proof against all the stabs of cowardice or shame. We shall not be turned backward; for, as in the old believing days, the figure of the Host shall be borne before. A daily hearing of Mass is a practical solution of many a spiritual difficulty. The troubles we have to endure will not grow less; for Satan is cunning; and temperament and native character are stubborn against change; but the spirit in which we shall go out to meet *the enemies that seek after our soul* will be wholly and divinely new. It is written: *I will put a new spirit into them.* Only those who are instant in that kind of "service" know what the "new Spirit" really means.

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm lxxiii, 20, 19, 22 [adapted] and 1.
EPISTLE: Gal. iii, 16-22.
GOSPEL: S. Luke xxvii, 11-19.

Introitus: Respice, Domine, in testamentum tuum, et animas pauperum tuorum ne derelinquas in finem: Exsurge, Domine, et judica causam tuam, et ne obliviscaris voces quærentium te.

Ut quid, Deus, repulisti in finem: iratus est furor tuus super oves pascuæ tuæ?

The Entrance Versicle: *Have regard unto Thy covenant, O Lord, and forsake not the souls of Thy poor forever: Arise, O Lord, maintain Thy cause, and forget not the prayers of them that seek Thee.*

O God, why hast Thou cast us off forever? Why is Thine anger enkindled against the sheep of Thy pasture?

HAVE regard unto Thy covenant, O Lord: The idea of a pact between God and the souls of His creatures is irritating to many modern minds, who either ignore a personal Deity altogether, or think of Him as a Being too vast to be adequately symbolized by the par-

ables of a prehistoric Oriental tribe. Yet, granted that Absolute Intelligence is primarily responsible for this visible show of things which we call the world, the notion of some such intimate and anthropomorphic relationship is eminently reasonable, if not inevitable. He was a wiser philosopher than he himself or his generation knew, who maintained that man must have invented a religion based on an imaginary Incarnation, if God had not actually revealed His Son in the flesh. "Not voiceless is the world unto the wise." The more one reflects upon it the more is one committed to the view that spiritual but finite life, with all its mysterious connotations, is indissolubly linked in origin, in growth and destiny with an infinite and all-providing Life-Giver from Whom it can never dwell far apart. That conviction lies at the root of all sound thinking about man and his relations to the supersensual universe.

Israel's nearness to Jehovah was accounted for on other grounds than those of derived existence or creaturehood. God had come close to His people and entered into an alliance with them. He had created a new economy of grace for all men when He foretold the advent of His Son; but the Jews were the objects of His extraordinary bounty, as being racially the source of salvation to the world. As in the earlier days of the flood He had established a Covenant with Noah and *every living creature of all flesh*, and set the token of it in the clouds, so in the time of Abraham He gave a more particular pledge,

ensuring to that great Father of all believers and to his descendants forever an ownership in the land of Canaan, the rich country of promise lying between the mountains and the sea. He appointed the mark of this latest bond to be carried from infancy in the body of every man-child born into the patriarch's household, or to be circumcised painfully even in adult life in the case of them that were purchased with money from the stranger. *Henceforth His everlasting Covenant was to be in the flesh of His people; Ishmael would He make a great nation; but His alliance was to be established with Isaac. Israel was to be an elect seed.*

When Moses and Aaron and Nadab and Abihu and the seventy elders of Israel received the summons to *come up unto the Lord*, Moses alone heard *all the words and judgments of Jehovah, and all the people answered with one voice: All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. . . . And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people and said: Behold the blood of the Covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning* [or, as we should say to-day, *on the ground of*] *all these words.* That event marked a crisis in the history of the chosen people. It was the miraculous beginning of a more corporate and splendid religion for the Hebrew race. The nobles looked up and saw the very *body of heaven in its clearness;* under the divine feet the firmament gleamed *like a paved work of sapphire stone.* After this purifying vision they understood that they

were not as other tribes. The fire and lightning of Sinai had welded them into an unselfish unity. *They became the Covenant Nation. They saw God, and did eat and drink.* Nearly four hundred years later the sacredness of that oath between Jehovah and His theocratic people received fresh emphasis in the promise made to the king, who had been *taken from the sheepcote and from following the sheep to be an appointed ruler, who was to build the House of the Divine Name, and in whom the Throne of the Kingdom was to be established forever.* We have the triumphant record of this more specific testament in the eighty-eighth psalm:

> I have made a covenant with my Chosen One,
> I have sworn unto David my servant,
> Thy seed will I establish forever,
> And build up Thy throne to many generations.

God's covenants under the old dispensation had a quasi-sacramental character. There was an outward sign always; and there was at least the promise of an exceeding great mercy. Vague at first, and having an immediate reference possibly to the events in which they intervened, they were nevertheless secular and far reaching in their sweep; they pointed to one greater than Abraham, greater than Moses, greater than David; they were made for the sake of that *Anointed One*, the Servant of Israel, the Christ in Whom the types and promises were to be fulfilled. They found their true meaning at last. The Covenant that He made on the night before He suf-

fered was as much greater than the " mercies " that foreshadowed it, as He Himself was greater than the greatest of His line. In that testament of His love *the day broke and the shadows fled away; for He had gone up to the mountain of myrrh, He had pleaded for us on the hill of frankincense.* Let us ask Him to have regard unto that Covenant to-day, while the memory and the Reality of it are renewed before our eyes.

Forsake not the souls of Thy poor forever: The word which has been translated by *souls* is a remarkably suggestive one. It may also mean, and is taken by some interpreters here to signify, *troop* or *family* or *congregation,* a clan or group, that is, *of one blood.* The process of transition in sense is not as arbitrary as it may seem. An instinct common to many of the Semitic tribes enjoined men to *eat the blood of no manner of flesh, for the soul of all flesh is the blood thereof.* (Lev. xvii, 10-14.) From *life* or *soul,* therefore, it came by the principle of association to stand for *blood* and afterwards for *all those united by blood* or, as we might English it here, *a congregation.* If we adopt this rendering of *cayyath* how deeply eloquent and mystical the phrase will become! *Forsake not the Congregation of Thy poor forever.* It is the Church in the first instance that will be meant in that hypothesis. She is made up of all those who have heard Our Lord's injunction *to be poor in spirit;* and they alone are poor in spirit who are made to be one blood in Christ through the efficacy of His Sacraments,

but chiefest of all through their communion in the Cup of Blessing by which His Passion is renewed in them. She is the Mother, too, of the actual poor, of the needy and indigent. It is our glory to live as Catholics in a country where pauperism has for a long time been associated with those who profess our creed. Are we ashamed of the badge? There is no severer test of the reality of a man's religion than his treatment of the poor.

Arise, O Lord, maintain Thy cause: The cause of the Blessed Sacrament is pre-eminently the cause of Jehovah in an unbelieving world. It is His daily pledge of the Covenant which shall never be called old. *I will create a New Thing upon the earth.* Does not Our Lord Himself say that this is life eternal to know the Father and Jesus Christ Whom that Father has sent? We shall never realize how wonderfully that Mission was accomplished, with what baffling subtlety, with what wasteful and overpowering excess of love, until we familiarize ourselves with the theology of the Mass. That is His cause. If we read the disheartening record of the controversies that have sprung out of that central truth of our belief, we may well cry out, *Arise, O Lord, maintain Thy cause.* He has been hidden under the " elements " so long. His priests have broken bread so many, many years, and yet but a fraction of mankind know vaguely what the ceremony means. Is it true, then, what the great De Lugo and other devout thinkers hold, in spite of Cardinal Cien-

fuegos' novel but pious counterview, that the actual conditions under which Our Lord is present on the altar are equivalent to something more awful than a second divine death? Is the Christ we hunger for asleep? Are His human ears deaf to the prayers of them that seek Him? *Arise, O Lord, maintain Thy cause! Help us all to realize more vividly how, being in a manner dead, Thou art gloriously alive and dost yet speak to us for our comfort, as Thou didst speak of old to Peter and the remnant who would not walk backward, nor deem Thy saying hard!*

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm lxxxiii, 10-11 and 2.
EPISTLE: Gal. v, 16-24.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. v, 24-33.

Introitus: Protector noster, aspice, Deus, et respice in faciem Christi tui: quia melior est dies una in atriis tuis super millia.

Quam dilecta tabernacula tua, Domine virtutum: concupiscit, et deficit anima mea in atria Domini.

The Entrance Versicle: *Behold, O God, our Protector, and look upon the face of Thine Anointed: For better is a single day in Thy courts than a thousand spent without them.*

How dear is Thy dwelling place, O Lord of Hosts! My soul hath longed, yea, it hath even fainted for longing for the enclosed places of Jehovah.

BEHOLD, O God, our Protector, and look upon the face of Thine Anointed: Our Blessed Lord is the true Anointed, the Messiah, the Christ of Israel. On the throne of His Father, before the day-spring of the heavens existed, and again in the human nature which He

took from the womb of His earthly mother, He was consecrated with the oil of gladness, sealed with divinity above His fellows, the kings and prophets who preceded Him in time. *For unto which of the Angels said He at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee? . . . And when He bringeth again His First begotten into the world He saith, Let all the angels of God adore Him. And of the angels He saith, Who maketh His angel spirits and His ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son He saith, Thy Throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.* The entire burden of prophecy in the old dispensation culminates in Our Lord's Messiahship; His is to be a consecrated life, the career of a King-Priest Who will save His people, declaring His Father's name unto His brethren in a sense that Moses could not understand, singing in the midst of His Church psalms of praise holier than those of David or Asaph, because He was to be made perfect through suffering, becoming thereby a true Captain of Salvation unto the many sons He was destined to bring unto glory.

For the student of Catholic theology and for devout thinkers generally the great value of the Epistle to the Hebrews lies in its striking application to Our Lord's life of this Old Testament idea. The Son of God came

into the world and He took upon Himself, *not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham.* He did this that He might be *a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God to make reconciliation for the sins of His people.* His Messiahship was threefold. It was hieratic; it was royal; it was divine. He was a consecrated priest; He was a true King of David's line; He was by nature the First and Only Begotten Son of God. These considerations will serve to throw some light on the meaning of this singularly dogmatic Introit. In the face of that Christ upon which the Father is besought to turn His gaze, faith beholds other Christs as well. It sees the mystical but corporate Christ that we call the Church, and along with that sustaining vision it discerns the not less mystical but individual Christ that is formed in each separately redeemed heart by baptism and the remission of sin.

Look upon the face of Thy Christ: Whatever difficulties may be raised with regard to the meaning of that phrase as it stands in the original context, there can be little doubt as to its liturgical application here in the Entrance Versicle. The Christ of the Altar is never seen by His Father apart from the Church. For the Church is the Assembly of His chosen, the Bride whom He has adorned and loved as His own Body. He has made Himself One with her in clean and everlasting Espousals; and we are members of the Same. It is her mission to testify daily to His abiding presence in the world He

came to regenerate and redeem. Through her has He renewed the face of the earth, and in her principally is He with us for all time. As the soul, in a certain not yet intelligible sense, while existing independently in its own spiritual order, is yet one with the body to which it gives warmth and motion and life, so is Christ one with His Church. She is God's collective Messiah, His Anointed One, in the New Israel. And, in inverse wise, as the body during life becomes the soul's hierophant, revealing in outward show and symbol the mysteries that are momentarily going on within, so is His mystical Body on earth Our Blessed Lord's best Interpreter. His mercies are always wider than His covenants. No one that loves Him will ever deny that. But in the sense that all sincere seekers after God belong in spirit to St. Peter's care and are claimed by him as his children, it is rather truer to say that the Visible Church is Christ's only Interpreter. Language could hardly be bolder than that of Origen and the Greek Fathers; and this parable of the soul and its body, as illustrating the unique and intimate relationship obtaining between Our Lord and the kingdom of hearts with which He has identified Himself in His human nature, is the one to which they most frequently recur. It came to them out of Scripture. It was enforced by St. Paul. Vast veins of unworked theologic metal still lurk beneath its surface meaning. How profound, for instance, is that saying of St. Augustine, that *Christians can never conceive adequately of Christ unless they first conceive adequately of the Church that expresses Him.*

He is not One, and we many, but we many are made one in His own oneness. One, therefore, is the Man-Christ, Head and Body. Again in that wonderful storehouse of original ideas, the *Enarrationes* or *Talks upon the Psalms*, he tells us how at last there is *One man Who speaks with every tongue to every variety of nation, One Man, Head and Body, One Man, Christ and the Church, the Perfect Man, He, the Bridegroom, and She, the Bride: for they shall be twain, it is written, in One Flesh.*

Better a single day in Thy courts than a thousand spent without them: The doctrine of the *Soul of the Church* is often abused by well-meaning people who turn it into a curiously pietistic apology for indifferentism. Yet it matters a good deal whether one belongs or not to the visible centre of unity. Until it has ensured that grace to every child of Adam the Church can never afford to rest. There must be *One Fold and One Shepherd.* Think of the loss that is suffered by so many millions in mere ignorance of the Sacraments and especially of this Greatest of all Sacraments. It is the testimony of many sincere converts, even among those who for a time fondly imagined that they possessed the substance, when they were in truth but embracing its shadow, that the real life of the heart only begins when they have learned to know Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar. Better a single day after that lesson in discernment than a thousand spent in the futilities of what is called "good faith." Good faith, we know, exists in the most unlikely quarters.

Temperament, the bias of early training and inherited views, untoward environment and the spiritual dim-sightedness that arises from having been long under the witchery of the idols of a "sectarian" cave, may make error for many a soul only too inevitable. Yet the Holy Ghost operates where He lists. No place is too dark for Our Lord's lamp; but who will answer boldly for a man's conscience in these cases? Who, but the spirit which is in a man? And if that spirit be a lying one, what then? Oh, it is safer every way to cling to the visible and infallible Church! The Father looks upon the Face of that Christ always. It, too, is heard for its obedience.

How dear is Thy Dwelling-Place, O Lord of Hosts! Enthusiasm for the decency of outer worship is an excellent thing which one can hardly have in excess so long as interior faith is robust and sound. Carefulness in religious observance is a Scriptural note of the just man. It was not for its zealous devotion to the temple-service that Israel was condemned and its priesthood overthrown. To be assiduous in ritual, to have joy in goodly edifices, in waxen tapers, in sacred vestments, in utensils of silver and gold, to be in love with the austere music of the choir and sanctuary are not necessarily the signs of mawkishness in religion, as is often charged against the souls who are inordinately enamoured of these things. The corrective lies ever in one's grasp of the real secret of the beauty of God's House. It is a *beauty hidden within;* the beauty of that Veiled Presence and the Sacrifice it con-

notes. How can we draw near to it without first making clean the holier temple of our hearts? Are not they the more gloriously "enclosed places of Jehovah," the Courts wherein He loves best to dwell, invited thereto by prayer and self-denial, or translated bodily in the Sacrament which, above all others, transforms us into veritable Christs, Kings and Priests of Israel? It is written: *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people.* That is never so true as when the members of the entire congregation, a church, or religious household, are met together at the Holy Table in the Dwelling Place of the Lord of Hosts.

The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm lxxxv, 1-4.
EPISTLE: Gal. v, 25, 10, vi, 1-11.
GOSPEL: S. Luke vii, 11-16.

Introitus: Inclina, Domine, aurem tuam ad me, et exaudi me: salvum fac servum tuum, Deus meus, sperantem in te: miserere mihi, Domine, quoniam ad te clamavi tota die.

Lætifica animam servi tui: quia ad te, Domine, animam meam levavi.

The Entrance Versicle: *Bend down thine ear to me, O Lord, and listen: Save thy servant, O my God, that trusteth in Thee: Have pity upon me, O Lord, for unto Thee have I lifted up my voice all the day long: Gladden the soul of Thy servant, for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul.*

BEND down thine ear to me, O Lord, and listen: From whichever side we approach it, the divine condescension will always remain one of the most baffling of mysteries. Viewed from the standpoint of God's infinite hunger for recognition and love, the thought of it forces

itself upon our minds as a divine necessity, even while faith persuades us that it must be free. On the other hand, the more we counterbalance the vastness and absolute nature of deity with our essential littleness and relativity, the more we are puzzled and scandalized at the realization in our own careers of each tiniest providence by which we live and move upward to our goal. *What is man that Thou art mindful of him or the son of man that Thou visitest him?* The abyss that yawns between us and the Father from Whom we have come is too broad and dark to be bridged even in imagination. Yet the Word of the Father, *Who was from the beginning and through Whom we ourselves were made,* has passed and repassed across it in His twofold nature. How can anything look like a condescension after that initial emptying-out of majesty and omnipotence? *God does condescend,* explain the fact as we will; Scripture is but one long record of divine graciousness. The deeds described in Genesis were a condescension; Christ was a condescension; the Mass is the Epitome and Renewal of both orders of mercy, strong and sweet and unfailing from day to day. *Bend down Thine ear to me, O Lord, and listen. Save Thy servant that trusteth in Thee.*

Have pity on me, O Lord, for unto Thee have I lifted up my voice all the day long: That God should have stooped to call us out of nothing creates a prejudice in favor of His readiness to stoop once more and call us out of death, the "second nothing that waits to devour us."

He will not suffer us to perish utterly, if we lift our cry to Him. The divine pity is with us in our helplessness always; it is with us twice over when we pray. *Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him up because he hath known My Name. He shall call upon Me and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in trouble! I will deliver him and bring him to honor.* It is not alone from death that He saves, from the overthrow, that is, of His Life and Spirit within us; He shields us from lesser harms, too, *if we cry to Him all the day long.* Unremitting prayer is almost omnipotent. Sickness, loss of goods or honor, the failure of friends, cowardice of the heart, loneliness, despair and all the other brood of griefs that may beset a man when the days of his unthinking youth are over, it is from these that Jehovah has pledged Himself to rescue us, if only we *lift our voice all the day long.* Lift it with the Priest and Victim on the altar to-day. Above and beyond every other ordinance of His mercy the Mass is *a very present help in trouble.*

Gladden the soul of Thy servant: Joy, and not sorrow, is the deepest thing in human life. How slow we are to learn that lesson! Yet, until we master it, our religion, whether we live in the cloister or in the world, is not radically sound. *Joy cometh in the morning.* The argument adduced by St. Paul to prove the excellence of charity above hope and faith may be urged in like manner in the case of Christian joy. It will last forever;

both here and hereafter it constitutes the very heart and substance of the kingdom of God, which is founded, as the same Apostle reminds us, *not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

Sorrow is good for a man in the way that medicine is good; it acts as a chastener and corrective; but the soul's proper health lies in gladness. Joy inspires the greatest and most enduring products of the human spirit. The highest music, the noblest flights of song, the fairest and most awe-engendering creations of color and form, have this clear note of heaven about them, that they add to the better joy of the world and impart to those who are laid under their spell *a savor of life unto life.* This is eminently true of God's handiwork in the Kingdom of His Son. The greatest Saints are ever the most joyous; their best deeds and utterances have a soul of gayety in them; their characters are aglow with a mysterious charm as of imprisoned but exuberant sunlight. Virtue goes out of them continually. Merely to learn their ways makes the pulse beat at a child's pace. In such company we grow young again in Christ. We feel that laughter and piety go easily and becomingly together. So do we fulfil Our Blessed Lord's injunction and pass unchallenged into His Kingdom, because we have yielded our hearts to the wine of gladness.

Gladden the soul of Thy servant, for unto Thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul: We can realize the value

of joy in the religious life by observing the untoward effect of sorrow. The Apostle tells the Corinthians that there is a *godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation, and a sorrow of this world that worketh death.* This latter sort of grief operates very insidiously; and St. Francis de Sales (one of the sweetest and manliest of modern saints because he has steeped himself in the cheerfulness and reasonableness of Christ) has drawn out for us the six evil consequences that follow an unchecked sadness. *They are: forgetfulness, sloth, indignation, jealousy, envy and impatience.* The list is a curiously significant one. Mediæval writers, like St. Thomas and Richard of St. Victor, insist that a propensity to secret uncleanness both in thought and action is one of the worst results of religious melancholy. That is a contention abundantly justified by the history of the first solitaries of Egypt, as it is likewise confirmed by the annals of early monachism in the Western Church. Along with this bias towards incontinency goes that hardly less fatal malady of the soul known variously as weariness, spiritual disgust and accidie. It is a true *tædium vitæ*, a dreary-head of heart wherein the mere effort to exist grows acutely more repugnant and distasteful. In this lack-lustre condition of being one needs wise counsellors and a prudent change of habitat; but no counsellor can compare with that Jehovah Who is said *to gladden the souls of them that put their trust in Him.* To seek Him courageously in the Holy Sacrifice, to be lifted up to Him in frequent and, if possible, in daily Communion,

is the way to lay hold of that joy which He has pledged Himself *not to take from us forever, if only we believe in Him. Gladden the soul of Thy Servant, O Lord, for unto Thee have I lifted up my soul.*

The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm lxxxv, 3, 5 and 1.
EPISTLE: Ephes: iii, 13-21.
GOSPEL: S. Luke xiv, 1-11.

Introitus: Miserere mihi, Domine, quoniam ad te clamavi tota die: quia tu, Domine, suavis ac mitis es, et copiosus in misericordia omnibus invocantibus te.

Inclina, Domine, aurem tuam mihi, et exaudi me: quoniam inops et pauper sum ego.

The Entrance Versicle: *Be merciful unto me, O Lord, for unto Thee have I cried all the day long: Because Thou, O Lord, art gracious and forgiving, and rich in loving-kindness to all them that invoke Thee.*

Bend down Thine ear to me, O Lord, and listen; for I am without resources and poor.

THE Entrance Versicle of to-day's Mass is taken from one of that group of psalms which seem to have been composed after the return from exile. It is full of a pathetic earnestness that harmonizes with the lessons of simplicity and affectionate *zeal for knowledge* inculcated in the Gospel extract and in the verses taken

from the Epistle to the Ephesians. We must cry to God always, as a child cries to its father. Is not all fatherhood on earth a derivation named from that first and absolute Fatherhood through which the Word is begotten in heaven, and in virtue of which *divinity is revealed,* and not conjecturally known, to the Church for all time? As children of the Catholic faith we are God's elected sons in a most particular and mysterious manner; Christ is our Elder Brother, being the *First Born before time,* as He is the *First Born,* likewise, *in time and after,* among all those who believe in the riches of God's loving-kindness and who are encouraged because of that belief to lift their voices to Him *all the day long.*

Be merciful unto me, O Lord: Seven times in the course of this Eighty-fifth Psalm is God addressed in His character of *Adonai.* The inspired singer is full of that strange collective consciousness which stirs always in the true son of Israel. The Lord of the Ineffable Name is *his* Lord. Israel is Jehovah's bond-servant and he will know no other Master. Therefore will he cry to Him *all the day long.* Is not that the attitude of the devout believer in every age of the Church? One is our Head, even Christ, and we have known Him, *gracious and forgiving always. The Lord said to my Lord: Sit Thou at my right hand.* Remember that when you see the Sacred Elements lifted up. Even under the accidents Christ is Lord and King. Judgment has been given to Him. If you are in sin He will deal mercifully. *Cry to*

Him and cease not. Many a conversion dates its earliest movement from a Mass thoughtfully followed.

Because Thou, O Lord, art gracious and forgiving: It is not easy to give the full sense of the original Hebrew phrase which appears in the Missal as *suavis ac mitis es.* The precise word for *mitis* is found only in this single verse out of all Scripture, though its equivalent rings pathetically in the famous One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Psalm, so familiar to us Catholics who live close to the faithful dead. *Quia apud Te propitiatio est! With Thee is propitiation! Thou canst be entreated!* The same idea comes out even more strikingly in the account given in Exodus of the renewal of the broken Tables of the Law. When the Lord came down early in the morning, and stood with Moses upon the top of Sinai *He proclaimed His Name.* And that Name was *The Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. Sawis ac mitis,* or *misericors et clemens*—it matters not how scribes or scholars have tried to render it. All those who believe in the Real Presence and who worship daily in the Mass have something better than a phrase in which to express their blessed conviction. They have the Divine Thing Itself, Christ Our Lord, gracious and forgiving, almost to the point of scandal! Oh, yes; in a sense it is difficult to understand. That Mercy should stoop so far is as hard a saying to-day, and in a garish world, as it was

long ago in Carpharnaum. But we know Who keeps the Word of Life. Let us turn to Him now. He is gracious and forgiving. That is His Name.

Rich in loving-kindness to all them that invoke Thee: Discussions on the preferences of the Divine Mercy are not profitable; and they may often become blasphemous. We believe that no creature of God's hands is ever beyond the reach of His graciousness. If the condition of the lost seems to give the lie to that statement, it is because we neither know how to adjust the contrarious attributes of mercy and justice; nor do we understand how a finite will can harden itself in malice against infinite and unwearying loving-kindness. Unless we are prepared to maintain that mercy without limit created the fires of the reprobate under-world of spirits, and that mercy without limit keeps them kindled through eternity, we can hardly be said to have apprehended seriously the lesson of hell. St. Gregory reminds us in a homily that *God in rewarding and punishing doth not tie Himself to the rigor of the law; for He punishes less than we deserve and He pays more than we have a right to claim.* In this sense that mercy which is over all the divine works is over the damned in their place of torment likewise. It is a great problem and more baffling in its way than the mystery of the Holy Trinity; for the latter seems but to confound the fundamental laws of the intellect; whereas the former confounds the better instincts of the heart. One day we shall pierce the veil, and the eternal loving-

kindness will be justified as rich even to those who invoked it for a space and yet went down thereafter into the pit.

Rich in loving-kindness to them that invoke Thee: The whole record of Scripture is a gloss on these words. As long as Israel's invocation was from the heart Jehovah never failed to hear. And in the Second Israel, which is His Church, is it not true that His better mercies have been with His chosen always, with the handful, that is, who invoke Him untiringly? Father Faber used to maintain, somewhat paradoxically, that few even bad Catholics were lost. Their vicarious invocation of the Divine mercy as members of a Church which cried to Him all the day long brought them a change of heart at the end. Who knows?

Gracious and forgiving and rich in loving-kindness: The value of Christianity to mankind, the sustaining significance of the Church's witness to God's inexhaustible mercy, quite apart from the lesson of individual and non-exclusive salvation in and through Christ, lies in no slight degree, it might be contended, in this, that it has read into the apparent heartlessness and cruelty of nature a meaning it could never otherwise convey. Behind the malign sequence of the physical universe there is another order of causation which makes us sweetly reconciled to the brute, non-moral agencies and forces of the visible world. Read in the light of that philosophy "the inverted bowl they call the sky" does not move so impo-

tently after all; nor does the sun within it shine with such inhuman carelessness upon the just and the unjust alike. And so we come to look upon it as modern Catholics look upon the purely exterior and ritualistic progress of the action of the Mass. Certain portions and aspects of it are not easily explicable out of hand to the grave enquirer; but we know that the solution is yet to be vouchsafed us. Christ the Lord, *Our* Lord, rich in loving-kindness, has passed through it; one day He will make all things plain. In like manner we may often be compelled to kneel through dark months, perhaps through years, of interior trial or outer conflict as the daily Renewal of the Great Act of Loving-Kindness shown to us on Calvary goes on before our eyes; but we shall not waver. *Adonai*, the Captain of the House of Israel, *will bend down His ear and listen; He will save His people with an outstretched arm; for He is gracious and easy to be entreated; He is rich in loving-kindness to every heart that calls upon His Name.*

The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Psalm cxviii, 137, 124 and 1.
EPISTLE: Ephes. iv, 1-16.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. xxii, 35-44.

Introitus: Justus es, Domine, et rectum judicium tuum: fac cum servo tuo secundum misericordiam tuam.

Beati immaculati in via: qui ambulant in lege Domini.

The Entrance Versicle: *Just art Thou, O Lord, and undeviating is Thine ordinance: Deal with Thy servant according to Thy mercy.*

Blessed are the undefiled in their way, who walk in the law of the Lord.

JUST art Thou, O Lord: The apparent contradiction between what faith tells us of God and the things that sight reveals, when we consider the moral government of the universe, is one of the hardest trials of the devout believer. History and daily experience have one tale to tell, but Scripture has quite another. Both are testimonies; *and their testimony does not agree.* One of the most serious thinkers of our generation, a real moulder of opinion, but, owing to his father's perverted

training of him, never capable at any time of appreciating the message of Christianity, has left on record the impression made on his heart by a contemplation of the cosmic forces of the material world; and this is what he has to say of them:

In sober truth, nearly all the things, which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another, are Nature's everyday performances. Killing, the most criminal act recognized by human laws, Nature does once to every being that lives; and in a large proportion of cases, after protracted tortures such as only the greatest monsters whom we read of ever purposely inflicted on their living fellow-creatures. If, by an arbitrary reservation, we refuse to account anything murder but what abridges a certain term supposed to be allotted to human life, Nature also does this to all but a small percentage of lives, and does it in all the modes, violent or insidious, in which the worst human beings take the lives of one another. Nature impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones like the first Christian martyrs, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons them by the quick or slow venom of her exhalations, and has hundreds of other insidious deaths in reserve, such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed. All this Nature does with the most supercilious disregard both of mercy and of justice, emptying her shafts upon the best and noblest indifferently with the meanest and worst; upon those who are engaged in the highest and worthiest enterprises and often as the direct consequence of the noblest acts; and, it might almost be imagined, as a punishment for them. She mows down those on whose existence hangs the well-being of a whole people, perhaps the prospects of the human race for generations to come, with as little compunction as those whose death is a relief to themselves, or a blessing to those under their noxious influence. Such are Nature's dealings with life.

Is this mere rhetoric, or does a real difficulty for the orthodox lie beneath its dismal presentment of the facts

of daily experience? Has not each one of us at some time or other felt the force of the temptation that lurks behind its malign view of the universe, and have we not been compelled always to take refuge in some saying of Scripture or in some incident in the life of Our Blessed Lord? Reason, of course, is capable of supplying a partial, if negative, answer; but what shall we do when we are brought face to face with the problem of moral evil? We do not ask why it should exist. We can see some vague justification for it in God's inexhaustible patience, in His determination to have the unseen world where His Son reigns built up of character which has been fire-tried and tested like precious metal. We can find the beginnings of an answer in the problems involved in free will, in the steadying notion of eternity.

> The years are long and the world is wide,
> But we all go down to the sea.

What is a single generation, what are twenty generations of unrequited and triumphant guilt, when outweighed by the thought of a righteous Avenger with Whom a thousand years are but as a single day? Yet even such a consideration, true as it undoubtedly is, does not really shed light on the dead gloom of the mystery. When we have crossed the barriers of death the difficulty seems still to await us. Why should Lucifer and his hosts be hardened in iniquity? Why should the lost hate forever the kind Hand that made them? Is there to be no final redistribution of things in which good, and

good alone, above justice and every other consideration shall prevail? Oh, that is the door to which there is no human key; and as we stand before it, do we not feel a secret and involuntary sympathy with saintly men like the late Père Rémy of the Society of Jesus, with Bourdaloue and thinkers of his sometimes disquieting school? They venture boldly across the vast abyss because they know that Our Lord is there; but when the waters are come into their soul they begin to sink. *O Dieu, je m'y perds! Que dirai-je? Mon Pere juste!* That last cry is the truest and most saving; and it is in the Mass that we learn to utter it most genuinely and from the heart. *Just art Thou, O Lord, and undeviating is Thine ordinance; if the judgments of Thy Father are a great deep, Thou art walking in the night upon the face of the waters. We shall not be engulfed, if only we come to Thee through the Church. When the Mass bell rings and the Elements are lifted up the tumult is always stilled for those who love and trust. O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt? He is just in all His ways.*

Just art Thou, O Lord, and undeviating is Thine ordinance: Perhaps a further answer lies in some such thought as this. Mere benevolence did not create the world of men and spirits; and the absolute and unmixed happiness of His creatures was not the ultimately controlling motive that determined God to stoop from His place of splendor and people the lower dark with souls. He is something more than Mercy and Benevolence; He

is Righteousness, too. He made us for His glory, for Himself, that is, first and last. He is Alpha and Omega; and it is because we have so poor a grasp of the absolute and unswerving sanctity involved in that aspect of "the Supreme Lord and Governor of the universe" that we are puzzled and overborne by the problem of sin. Jehovah is good, and His goodness will be victorious in the end. Evil will not endure forever; for evil is but wilful rebellion against those divine ordinances which are said to be undeviating. The punishment that finally overtakes unrepented guilt—that must endure. He has said it, and His judgments change not; but punishment is not really a moral evil. *Rectum judicium tuum!* His pronouncements are upright. There is something relentless and unswerving in His pursuit of them. It is possible to secure them all, and, in the original divine intention, *God wills to secure them all without hurt to the happiness of the least of His creatures;* but, because we are free, that will of His is not despotic. He has made it dependent upon our co-operation. We may and shall all be saved in Christ, *if we will.* Ask Him during Mass to-day to deal with you according to His mercy; but do you at the same time be willing to close with that mercy.

Blessed are the undefiled in their way, who walk in the law of the Lord: To lead a blameless life, to be of those who are undefiled in their progress towards death and judgment, is a great happiness. *Beati immaculati!* A good Catholic is helped to such blamelessness in innu-

merable ways. Prayer is an aid; the Sacraments are an aid; and this greatest of the Sacraments is the most infallible of all aids. Cleanness of living is hardly attainable by any other means than by frequent Communion and the devout hearing of Mass. It is no idle ordinance that the rulers of the Church enforce through the Sundays of the year. It is the law of Jehovah, and He has willed that we should all walk in it. *By such paths does He compass His chosen, upholding them in their goings, and making of their progress towards Himself a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Eccli. xxxvi, 18, and Ps. cxxi, 1.
EPISTLE: 1 Cor. i, 4-9.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. ix, 1-7.

Introitus: Da pacem, Domine, sustinentibus te, ut prophetæ tui fideles inveniantur: exaudi preces servi tui, et plebis tuæ, Israel.

Lætatus sum in his, quæ dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus.

The Entrance Versicle: *Grant peace, O Lord, to them that wait upon Thee, that Thy prophets may be found faithful: Hear the prayers of Thy servant, and of Thy people, Israel.*

I was glad at this that was said to me: We will go into the house of the Lord.

GRANT peace, O Lord, to them that wait upon Thee: In times of public trial a clear, sudden line of definition invariably appears in the Church, marking off the remnant of those who believe and hope from the mass who waver and refuse to wait. It is the story of the Pas-

sion over again. *His disciples, leaving Him, fled.* The history of all great heresies bears out the observation. Arianism affords a striking case in point; the Reformation is still another; and in our own day we have the slow, insidious advance of the two-headed scandal of secularism and vain science. In these various seasons of probation, so far as they are apprehended and realized by the individual soul, it is curious to note how inevitably men range themselves on either one of two sides. There are those who wait upon Jehovah, because they know that with Him is the peace that will make with the temptation issue, and there are those who will not wait, because, as they hold, His prophets have proved untrustworthy and their messages cruelly untrue. That the most insignificant member of the household of the faith should fall away in such a crisis is terrifying enough to one who prizes his own " fellowship with Saints," but it is doubly terrifying when those in authority fail. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* The human element in the Church is hardly less perplexing than the divine; and it is so perplexing, because, having been made the channel to us of stupendous truths and mysteries, it may be discovered wanting in particular instances. It may even be turned into an instrument of error; it may mislead where it was intended to edify. How many a simple peasant owed his loss of belief during the Reformation period to the apostasy of highly placed personages, ecclesiastical not less than civil? How many a soul, groping towards the light to-day, is left utterly in outer dark-

ness *because the prophets of Christ have not been found faithful? In the presence of such a trial we know what to answer.* One is our Master, even Christ; one house alone is the true House of Knowledge, the great Church Catholic, which He in His providence made Roman and Apostolic. It is His word always that we receive, not the priest's, however learned, nor the saint's, however holy; and it comes to us hall-marked with orthodoxy, because it is uttered from Peter's Chair. It is in this spirit that we must ever approach the scandals of history and combat the defections that sometimes startle us in our own times. *Put not your trust in princes!* Never pin your faith to priests or prelates, neither to scholars nor schools of theological opinion. It is not wrong to be for Paul or Apollo, if Paul and Apollo be for Christ; but it is safer every way to be for Christ alone *in and through His Church.* Wait for her to speak, and peace will be granted for the waiting. Partizanship is too often confounded with zeal for the faith, though they are as wide apart as the poles of heaven. It requires courage as well as patience to wait upon Jehovah, and not to be instant in demanding "definitions;" for true faith is like true charity in this, that *it suffereth long and is kind, it envieth not, vaunteth not itself and is not puffed up.* Steadfastness is its first note and its last; its life is in waiting!

There is something of a rebuke to the restlessness and feverishness of human energy in the thought of the

unchanging Eucharistic Sacrifice. Controversies have waged without; schools have wrangled; the Church herself has been obliged to lift a warning voice through her Pontiffs and Councils; but meanwhile, within the holy place where the Elements are daily offered, the ancient rite goes on. Prayers and hymns of praise have been added, and ceremonies have grown, gathering a deeper significance as the centuries move on, but in its substance the Mass that we Catholics glory in is the same to-day that it was on the night wherein Our Lord first offered it. A thoughtful writer of our own generation, not a son of the household, but a critical antiquarian approaching the strange phenomenon from without, confesses that the *Mass is said to-day in the Roman Church substantially as it was said in secret in the days of Marcus Aurelius.* He might have added, too, that many portions of our liturgy are more venerable than parts of the New Testament itself. How the thought of that soothes and sustains one amid the foolish speculations of a shallow world always in love with the new thing, always disdainfully neglectful of the old! It is the sectaries who have changed, not we. *This is the peace that Jehovah has granted to His Church; she has waited upon Him, and He has heard her prayer, the prayer of His own people, Israel.* Every age has borne witness to the Blessed Sacrament; and it is owing doubtless to the efficacy of that Clean Oblation, offered unremittingly with each cycle of the sun, that so many of *the prophets have been found faithful,* that so many witnesses, saints and pontiffs and theologians, have

arisen at sundry times to reassure us that Christ is truly with us, that *His flesh is meat indeed, and His blood drink indeed.*

I was glad at this that was said to me: We will go into the house of the Lord: Private visits to the Blessed Sacrament are of immense advantage to one who wishes to lead an interior and spiritual life; and, if they are made in a spirit of robust faith, they become a true cause of joy. The chronicles of the cloistered saints abound in touching and confirmatory examples. Not a few, too, of those who have sanctified themselves in the world will bear witness from their place in glory to the power a single visit has often had to dispel all gloom and drive away heaviness of heart. It is in these secret audiences that we are shown *the paths of life; for in that Presence is the fulness of joy; and at His right hand are pleasant things forevermore.* It is idle to allege, as is sometimes done, that there is little or no evidence in antiquity for this particular form of devotion; because, in the first place, the silence of antiquity, even if it were as absolute as some have vainly endeavored to make out, could still be adequately explained. Men believed in the Real Presence then as sincerely as Catholics believe now. If their belief found expression in other ways than ours, why should we let that fact rob us of so palpable a blessing? What has their silence to do with our more expanded belief? We are certain that Our Blessed Lord is there in the Tabernacle, ready to be our Food, our Viaticum, in the

last dread journey. Can it be wrong to thank Him for that evidence of His love? Though in the extraordinary state by which His living Body is conditioned in that awful presence, He can, naturally speaking, neither feel, nor think, nor perform the least outward act—for to such all but daily annihilation has love constrained Him, as De Lugo reminds us—yet we know, too, that the joy of His human soul is full and untroubled, as it looks steadfastly from its place on the right hand of the Father into the bosom of the divine Beatitude, and surely we may ask that some of that gladness may be poured in measure upon ourselves and all who wait upon Him.

We will go into the House of the Lord: Provided one does not neglect one's obvious duty, it is impossible to kneel too often, or to remain too long in the Presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Many miss the point of that consoling form of interior religion, because they do not know how to employ the time there wisely. If you are not practised in any of the varieties of mental prayer taught by the saints and notably by St. Ignatius of Loyola, take a Book of the Psalms and recite some verses slowly and with feeling before the altar. Or take a chapter of the Fourth Book of that remarkable treasure house of devotion, the *Following of Christ*, and read it slowly, phrase by phrase, making of it a kind of music of the soul. You will be sensible of a new fire in your heart; a peace above all understanding will flood the

unexplored deeps of personality, and make you cry out:

> I was glad when they said unto me,
> Let us go into the House of Jehovah.
> Our feet shall stand at last
> Within thy gates, O Jerusalem!

The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Isaiah and Jeremiah (passim) and Ps. lxxvii, 1.

EPISTLE: Ephes. iv, 23-28.

GOSPEL: S. Matt. xxii, 1-14.

Introitus: Salus populi ego sum, dicit Dominus: de quacunque tribulatione clamaverint ad me, exaudiam eos; et ero illorum Dominus in perpetuum.

Attendite, populo meus, legem meam: inclinate aurem vestram in verba oris mei.

The Entrance Versicle: *I am the Salvation of My People, saith the Lord: Out of the midst of whatsoever trouble they may cry to Me, I will listen to them: I will be their Lord forever.*

Give ear, O My People, to My Teaching: Incline your ear to the words of My mouth.

I AM the Salvation of My People, saith the Lord: When Israel escaped out of Egypt, and the House of Jacob from a people that spoke not his tongue, Judah became his sanctuary, and the dominions into which he passed were to be swayed by no other kingship but

Adon's. The mighty Lord, Eloah-Jacob, as one of the earliest of sacred folk-songs has it, the same true God Who had led Israel dry-shod through the waters of the Red Sea, was to be his Refuge and Salvation always. That is the one burden of the whole of the Old Testament teaching. It is the secret of Israel's exclusiveness. As a nation he failed miserably, passing into a worse servitude than that of Pharaoh's, because he forgot the primary lesson. He sought help in strange gods and in degrading alliances; and when, at last, the great choice had to be faced, he confessed that he had no king but Cæsar. These things, St. Paul reminds us, happened for an example. We, too, are an elect stock, *a people of acquisition,* as St. Peter, recalling a pathetic warning of Moses in Deuteronomy, is careful to insist upon. *Christ has brought us forth out of the iron furnace,* even out of the Egypt of a life of darkness and sin; and the condition of our perseverance in the liberty wherewith He has enriched us in His Church is that we should look to Him as our sole Salvation, our present Help in every form of trouble that comes to try us. The true Catholic has many ways of seeking Christ. Prayer is his instinctive way; alms-giving and deeds done in charity to secure that end are also good; they carry with them the promise of a divine reward in some disguise or other; but the most infallible way *to make our calling sure* and to avoid disaster under the stress of adversity, is to be instant in the use of sacramental confession as a preparation for frequent Communion. We may not always escape the actual griefs

that first filled us with dismay; but we shall surely meet them in a changed spirit. They will come no longer as toils, but rather as clews leading us through a kind of divine labyrinth that winds we know not whither, save that it winds to God. Night, it is written, brings out stars, and sorrow shows us truth. Ah, but there will be little comfort in the truth unless it be living in Christ! It is one of the many secret providences that Our Lord has contrived for souls in the Blessed Eucharist that frequent contact with it begets fortitude. Rightly is it called the *Bread of the Strong*. In the vigor of it we go forward to the Mountain of God.

I am the Salvation of My People, saith the Lord: The history of the great persecutions in the Church affords a stimulating commentary on that little text. While kings and emperors were issuing edicts in the early days of the faith, Mass was said without intermission in secret chambers, in dark corners, in sand-pits, in catacombs, sometimes even amid the filth and squalor of dungeons. Unbelieving historians may give what explanations they choose; they may multiply hypotheses, and invent causes; but there is the broad fact. Time that deals ruthlessly with theories serves to set events in perspective. He that views them now may prophesy. We that come after know how best to account for the wonder. A despised "sect" suddenly appears out of the East, stammering forth a "foolish message," singing its hymns, and performing a strange ante-lucan rite of which slaves and

belated revellers report variously. It is hooted at, vilified, spurned, or described patronizingly by provincial officials in well-written despatches to the Emperor, according to the temper and knowledge of the amazed looker-on. Within a century and a half from its earliest appearance one of its apologists can write:

> We are of yesterday, and already we fill all the places that belong to you, your cities, your islands, your strongholds, your free-towns, your exchanges, the very camps and tribes and tithings, palace, senate-chamber, forum: we have left you your temples alone.

The despised "sect" won the allegiance of the cultivated and the powerful, and the mysterious rite which had been at first so cruelly mis-denoted became the most august act of worship that ever brought the good or the learned to their knees. *Christ was the Salvation of His People.* Out of the tribulation of ten fiery trials His Church cried to Him daily at the altar. In each several trial He heard her and gave her peace. *Had He not promised to be her Lord forever?*

Give ear, O My People to My teaching: Incline your ear to the words of My mouth: Our Lord repeats that charge in every age. The message of the Church in His behalf is in reality His own message about Himself. Her testimony is His testimony. Her apostles, her accredited spokesmen, *the teachers that are sent,* are His ambassadors. *Legatione Christi funguntur.* Through their ministry God beseeches us to be reconciled to Himself in

Christ. It is in His behalf they speak, as being united to the person of His Vicar. The Church never presumes to add to that first evangelical teaching. The primary deposit, the treasure of doctrine laid up with her for faithful custody, contains *new things and old*. It would seem, indeed, to have been substantially completed with Our Lord's earthly career; but we are free to hold, as many do, that the mysteries connected with Pentecost added materially to its bulk. However that may be, one thing is clear and certain; the Holy Spirit of God quickened the original nucleus when He came down upon the Apostles with the Gift of Tongues. He endued it with an energy that appears almost relentless to us now, so fiercely do we observe that living stream of truth sweeping forward in history to its goal. In every epoch it carries the Salvation of Christ to kings and peoples; it transforms His message into the dialect of every school of thought. To vary the figure by the aid of a parable, the wine is always new, and the bottles are never allowed to become dangerously old. Those who stand without are sometimes puzzled at all this. Catholic dogma seems such a pedantically complex thing when set side by side in contrast with the simplicity of the New Testament pages. But the answer is as we have hinted before. It is the way of great truths to grow and expand. They have a life of their own, independently of our attitude towards them. It is but a narrow and ill-conditioned spirit of exegesis that would make the mustard-seed emblematic of nothing more than a geographical but doctrinally un-

developed Catholicism. As Vincent of Lerins reminds us, there must be a true development of dogma; there need not, there cannot, be change of view. *Profectus sit ille fidei, non permutatio.* And so with regard to the inevitable expansions of our own day, if we have acquired by daily adoration that true humility of heart which a dogma like the Real Presence demands from us, *we shall give ear to all the Church's teaching, we shall bow our heads and listen to each precious word of her mouth.* But this is a larger subject than can be treated here; and it has practical issues beyond the imaginings of many who get easy credit for orthodoxy.

The Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

Introit: Dan. iii, 31, 30, 43, 42, and Ps. cxviii, 1.
Epistle: Ephes. v, 15-21.
Gospel: S. John iv, 46-53.

Introitus: Omnia quæ fecisti nobis, Domine, in vero judicio fecisti, quia peccavimus tibi, et mandatis tuis non obedivimus: sed da gloriam nomini tuo, et fac nobiscum secundum multitudinem misericordiæ tuæ.

Beati immaculati in via: qui ambulant in lege Domini.

The Entrance Versicle: *Everything that Thou hast done to us, Thou hast done in true judgment, O Lord, because we have sinned against Thee, and Thy Commandments we have not obeyed: But glorify Thy Name, and deal with us according to the abundance of Thy mercy.*

Blessed are the undefiled in their way: who walk in the law of the Lord.

EVERYTHING that Thou hast done to us, Thou hast done in true judgment, O Lord:

That confession of Azarias, which the Church has embodied in the Introit to-day out of the Book of Daniel, touches upon a profound difficulty of faith. If we have

the right temper of Christianity, we are ready enough to acknowledge that whatever adversity befalls in one's own private career is, in reality, *a true judgment of God*, as being a chastisement for sin; but we are often baffled and confounded when we are called upon to apply the rule to others, and especially to the Church at large. We accept it in our own case, we say, because it fits in harmoniously with that penitential view of the world which Our Lord bids us cultivate. To acquire the habit of submitting bravely to misfortune in order to fill up what is lacking to us of the Passion of Christ is a wise ambition even in the most advanced disciple. It is one of those *fruits worthy of penance* that we must all bring forth, if we are to make our baptism ultimately effective by *escaping the wrath to come*. But that is not the whole account of the matter. There is more suffering in this life than brings retribution to the wicked. If *there is no evil in the city which the Lord hath not done*, we are too frequently distressed when the infidel cries that much of it looks wanton and gratuitous. Why should the innocent suffer along with the guilty? Why should he too often be overtaken instead of the guilty? Does vicarious atonement for the offences of the world fall on all the Sons of God, on the children of adoption, as well as on His First and Only Begotten *Who became Sin that He might also become Reconciliation for us?* These are hard questions to solve, and Scripture does but add to their difficulty when we search it for an answer. The blind man, that Our Lord healed with a little clay and spittle and then

sent to bathe in the pool of Siloe, had not sinned; neither had his parents; and yet he had been blind from his birth *that the deeds of God should be made manifest in him.* Again, neither the Galilæans, *whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices,* nor the *eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloe fell,* were debtors to God above their race and kindred; and yet Our Lord drew from their sudden taking-off a parable and a lesson of warning on the need of repentance. The truth is, God does not need the ordinary forces of nature as sanctions of His moral law. His government of men is built on more spiritual foundations. He causeth His sun to shine and His rain to descend on the just and the unjust alike; but behind the rain and the sunshine His true judgment waits. That cold mechanical indifference to human worth or guiltiness, which we think we detect in the material universe, may be a perplexing reality, or it may be only a delusion inevitable to the restricted plane of our present existence, which is one of trial and not of finality; but, whatever view we take, we must never forget, that, neither in the Old Testament nor in the New, is the natural world represented as God's ordinary theatre of justice. It is in death and the mystery that comes after it that His solemn assizes are held. He may send His "destroying angel" or He may come Himself like a thief in the night to summon us; His law is always perfect, *enlightening the mind,* whether it flash upon us then in some sudden visitation of His anger, or shine like the day star in our hearts amid the gathering obscurities of a commonplace demise. In

every event that has happened up to that moment of final illumination we shall see in our own case, at least, how *all has been done in judgment, because we have sinned against Him and have not obeyed His commandments;* and in the case of other men—if the anxieties of the hour will permit us to occupy ourselves with anything less than the soul's supremest need—we shall confess that His judgments were likewise true, even when they seemed a great deep.

Because we have sinned against Thee: If the difficulty we have dwelt upon does not come home to us we may take comfort in the thought that God has made our way so plain. The submissive mood is a wise one for most men, when following a Voice through the darkness. However straightforward one's path has been amid the lesser problems of belief and conduct, it is inevitable that mere logic should falter, when suddenly confronted with the higher ventures of faith. *It is the sense of sin that saves one then.* To be convicted of sin is to feel the need of God in every direction; and He has answered that need in Christ, Who is none other than the Word through Whom the soul of man, struck dumb in the presence of mystery, finds a tongue to speak. *We know Whom we have believed;* and we know, further, that His *judgment is just and true,* because we are conscious that we have not obeyed His Commandments. It is said that there is no prerequisite so essential to an unadulterated act of faith as perfect integrity of heart. That, doubtless, ex-

plains the unshaken trust of children; for it is foolish to maintain, that, because babes and sucklings and illiterates can give no intellectual account of their processes of belief, the faith by which *they perfect praise* is necessarily less precious in Our Lord's eyes than the faith of scribes and doctors.

If integrity, then, will do so much, the humble consciousness of sin, which is its noblest substitute when once it has been lost, will be equally availing. It will illuminate the dark places over which the soul has to fare on its way to peace. Let all those who come knocking at the door of the Church in these too contentious days bear that well in mind; let them convict their hearts of sin before they attempt to deal courageously with the sophistries of the understanding. Even before they make their great renunciation let them be induced to kneel submissively while Mass is offered from day to day, uttering the while, with a great cry of the heart, this confession of Azarias: *Everything that Thou hast done to us, Thou hast done in true judgment, O Lord, because we have sinned against Thee, and Thy Commandments we have not obeyed. But glorify Thy name, and deal with us according to the abundance of Thy mercy!*

The Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

Introit: Esther xiii, 9-10, and Ps. cxviii, I.
Epistle: Ephes. vi, 10-17.
Gospel: S. Matt. xviii, 23-25.

Introitus: In voluntate tua, Domine, universa sunt posita, et non est qui possit resistere voluntati tuæ: tu enim fecisti omnia, cœlum et terram, et universa quæ cœli ambitu continentur: Dominus universorum es.

Beati immaculati in via: qui ambulant in lege Domini.

The Entrance Versicle: *Under Thy dominion, O Lord, have all things been established, and there is no man that can gainsay Thy will: For Thou hast made all things, heaven and earth, and whatsoever is comprised within the spaces of the sky: Of the universe of things Thou art Lord.*

Blessed are the undefiled in their way: who walk in the law of the Lord.

UNDER Thy dominion, O Lord: There is much in the world about us, that, if rightly considered, will reveal the mind of God; but *all the things that are* express in some sense the omnipotence of His will. Other wills arrange, dispose and adapt; they pass from contrivance to realization laboriously; they achieve only through ef-

fort, and always with a kind of waste of the spirit; the divine will alone is easy, noiseless, all-encompassing, supreme. The half-defiant assertion of its over-lordship that rings like a challenge and an exhortation in the proem to St. John's Gospel, seems to represent, in our own times at least, the Church's attitude toward its secret power. *Without it nothing was made of all the created things we see.* Its external activities were put forth in some mysterious way that justified the inspired evangelist in appropriating to the Word its victories over chaos. It has manifested Itself to our human intelligences, to our eyes and ears and hands, in the perfect manhood born of Mary and known to us in time as Christ. In that manhood it dwelt corporeally, distinct from it, indeed, yet most wonderfully united to it thenceforth forever, because the Person Who was substantially identical with its energy, assumed our nature and made it completely and sacredly His own. If the Word was with God, if the Word *was* God, Christ, the Son of Mary, was not less truly, if diversely, the Word; and of His fulness do we still receive daily in the Mass.

There is none that can gainsay Thy will: The omnipotence of the divine will is, to our poor, human thinking, the most awe-inspiring note about it. It never fails of its end. It has written the record of its more remote triumphs in the laws and facts and forces of the visible world. It has traced, as with a fiery finger, a still more terrible reminder of its behests in the hearts and consciences of all the tribes and brotherhoods of men. *This*

is the Light that lighteneth every man coming into this world. High above the tumult and Babel of history the fine, inner ear of faith detects the clear, thin cry:

> The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof;
> The world and all they that dwell therein.

The world and all they that dwell therein! Kings and ministers and chosen peoples dream their dreams of conquest; they plot and intrigue or go out to war; they establish themselves and their works; they make themselves a great name and take little thought of the Lord of Hosts, the Jehovah of Battles, Who moves so mysteriously amid their ranks; but one far-off divine event still shapes the destiny of the world; Christ is more and more; *the Assembly of the Holy Ones,* which is His Church, still praises Him, and bears faithful witness to His Will in the twentieth century as it did aforetime to the Jew, the Roman and the Greek, the barbarian of the Rhine, or the tribes dwelling in the furthest islands of the sea. One may not be able to formulate it satisfactorily; but it is idle and shallow to deny a purpose in the onward march of events. One Will seems to be moving silently but relentlessly behind the pageant, whether the solemn show move the various beholders to laughter or to tears. *De præparato habitaculo suo!* How often the Church sings those words! *From the tabernacle that He hath prepared for Himself,* from the Church in the midst of which His Clean Oblation is offered up from day to day, *He looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth;*

He considereth all their works. There is no king saved by the multitude of an host; for the Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: He maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the Lord standeth forever!

There is no man that can gainsay Thy will . . . for of the universe of things Thou art Lord: How true that is of the forces that sway the physical world! So unchanging are they in their inevitable causation that a large part of human life is built up on faith in their iron stability. Who by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature, when they alone are in question? This is the will of Him *Who hath made the winds His messengers and His ministers a flame of fire.* In the material universe He is Lord and King; He will not lightly interfere with its working. And in the moral order not less clearly are His ordinances read; nor are they wholly without sanction during the term of a man's natural life. Think of the evil consequences to the inner and withdrawn heart arising from the habit of secret self-indulgence in lust, or from laxity in truth-telling, from envy, and the like. In their more essential aspects these laws seem to be as unchanging as God's own wisdom and holiness itself. Many of these things He could not make lawful even if He would. But it is in the New World of Grace that His omnipotence is most baffling to contemplate, and most terrible for man to gainsay. It is easy to lose oneself in the dark labyrinth of this divine forest, if one wanders far

from the Tree upon which Our Salvation hung. Mere logic will only mislead us here.

Let us learn a parable from the barren fig-tree of heresy, from Calvinism, from Jansenism, and their modern imitations. Isolated texts of Scripture, however stern and uncompromising may be their message, must always be read in the light of Our Blessed Lord's countenance as He looks down upon us from the Cross. If there are individual Fathers, who seem to teach an austerer rule of exegesis, what can their testimony avail against the triumphal tidings of the New Testament taken as a whole, and the sweet construction put upon its darker passages by Our Mother, the Church? After all, she is the only guide to whom we can safely have recourse, if we wish to understand Our Lord's human character or share in the life He offers, even to reprobates, so abundantly? Out of the gloom that envelops one who tries to fathom this mystery one message rings silver clear. It is the message of the very Apostle whose difficult—because only half-apprehended—sayings are so often cited against the orthodox, and he tells us that *God wills all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth.* Any process of dialectics that militates against that first axiom of Catholicism is a doctrine of devils and stands self-condemned. Let those thoughts comfort the heart when the head is bowed in adoration before the uplifted Host. Say then with St. Paul: *He died for me; He gave Himself up for me; for He came into the world to save sinners, of whom I, even I, am chief.*

The Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Ps. cxxix, 3, 4 and 1.
EPISTLE: Phil. i, 6-11.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. xxii, 15-21.

Introitus: Si iniquitates observaveris, Domine, Domine, quis sustinebit? Quia apud te propitiatio est, Deus Israel.

De profundis clamavi ad te, Domine, Domine, exaudi vocem meam.

The Entrance Versicle: *If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? Yea, but there is the Propitiation with Thee, O God of Israel.*

Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice.

IF Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? God does take note of sin; reason and faith alike tell us that; but they tell it differently. The moment we admit that the Absolute sits throned as Supreme Intelligence and Righteous Will above this changing flux of things, we are committed to the idea of a mor-

al government of the world. He that speaks so persistently in the human conscience must have His sanction somewhere. The transgressor may escape it to-day or to-morrow; he may even succeed in setting its terrors at defiance throughout a long career of evil-doing; yet the general instinct of mankind is right, when it holds that it cannot be well forever with such a soul. Every wrong bears its own nemesis; it brings forth fruit unto death; it is the good, and the good alone, that is destined to prevail. That is the secret and particular lesson of the unspoiled conscience; every heart that has sinned has its own version of it; it is the lesson also of history; and blessed are the nations that have regard thereto. When the tale of offences is filled up, the blow falls; and we realize how God has been taking count of them one by one. Israel, Egypt, Assyria, Rome—do these names convey no warning?

If Thou shouldst mark iniquities: It matters much in the onward march of a race how it conceives of God's attitude toward sin. Take the Greek and the Jew, for illustration, and appraise by contrast their relative importance in the vitality of the world to-day. The one lives only as a memory or an abstraction; he survives in certain ideals of art, and thought and polity, which are precious, indeed, but which are still as so much dust in the balance compared with the mightier realities inexorably bound up with the other. The Greek as a presence is dead, while the Jew, in spite of his sins and his age-

long apostasy from the rule of Jehovah's Servant is still vigorously and racially alive and intact.

And what is true of races holds equally true of the individual man. It matters much how each of us conceives of God's mind toward sin. If we think of Him as observing it, *watching it carefully and almost craftily*—for the Hebrew word connotes all that—our weight in the moral order will be enormous. Men will think of us as being *alive and marked with character;* and not men only, but angels and fallen spirits and all ministers of temptation as well.

If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities: There is a sense in which it is true to say, that God's behavior *towards the sinner*, however He be minded towards the sin, is one of pity and forgiveness, rather than of rigor. *Else who, indeed, could stand?* Half of the pathos of Job's trial lay in that inner conviction, which he seemed never to be able to set aside, that God was always watching him, noticing curiously the condition of his heart.

> For now Thou numberest my steps;
> Thou givest no heed to my sin.

It is as though he reproached the divine Chastener for a want of proportion between the transgression and the punishment meted out to it. If every small transgression were to be observed and remembered against a day of reckoning, who could escape? *Is God then relentless?*

No, God is not relentless. If He has set our iniquities before Him, our secret sins in the light of His countenance, if our days are passed away in His wrath, if we spend our years as a tale that is told, yet He has taught us to apply our hearts to the Wisdom that hath made its dwelling-place with the Most High. It is in that Word of His understanding, which is none other than His own Son, the Image of the increate Substance, that we shall find the true Propitiation of Jehovah. There is a Redemption plentiful above our power to receive, and we take It to ourselves and make It our own in measure, as often as we approach It through the holy sacraments. How transcendently out of all measure does It become our Gift, when we draw nigh to It in the holiest of all sacraments offered up in the mystery of the Mass!

Yea; but there is the Propitiation with Thee, O God of Israel: Quia apud te Propitiatio est! The striking emphasis of the Hebrew is lost in the Vulgate phrase. *The Propitiation*, and not merely forgiveness! Was the emphasis designed? However it was understood of old, there can be no doubt about its pregnant meaning in the Introit. *Thou, O Lord, art good and easy to be entreated* runs a previous Entrance Versicle which we have considered. *Easy to be entreated, ready to forgive*, because Our Atonement, Christ the Word, *hath ascended on high; He hath led captivity captive.* The nature that was in bondage now sits at the right hand of the Most High, *making intercession for us.* That pleading is re-

newed daily, not in Figure, but in Reality, as often as the Mass is celebrated on earth. It is no mere Analogue at which we assist. It is the Sacred Thing Itself; and its power to move the Father, to turn Him from anger to pity, is, so far as the rite itself goes, absolutely without limit. No secret unworthiness on the part of the ministering priest can stay the hand that is lifted up in heaven to blot out the indictment against us. Nothing but our own wills can do that. "When all other remedies and contrivances had failed," says Isaac of Antioch, "Christ, the Good Physician, devised this medicine of the Eucharist to make the sick well and bring the dead to life! Sacrifices were no expiation, and goats did not make us clean; but this sacrifice hath justified us in the room of them all!"

Out of the depths have I cried to Thee, O Lord! Out of the abyss of the mysteries of force and matter and life that centre round this daily offering, out of the deep of our own sins, which the nearness of this awful Presence suddenly reveals, let us lift our cry. Jehovah will hear our Voice, for the Voice is the Christ, the Word, Whom we have made our own by obedience and living faith!

The Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Jer. xxix, 11 ss., and Ps. lxxxiv, 2-3.
EPISTLE: Phil. iii, 17, to iv, 3.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. ix, 18-26.

*Introitus:** Dicit Dominus: Ego cogito cogitationes pacis et non afflictionis: invocabitis me, et ego exaudiam vos: et reducam captivitatem vestram de cunctis locis.

Benedixisti, Domine, terram tuam: avertisti captivitatem Jacob.

The Entrance Versicle: *Thus saith the Lord: My thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment: Ye shall call upon Me, and I will hearken to you: And from every quarter will I lead your captives home again.*

Thou hast blessed Thine own land, O Lord: Thou hast ended the captivity of Jacob.

MY thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment: So far as we have any means of judging, we are constrained to admit that God's visible economies

* From to-day until the beginning of Advent the *Entrance Versicle* remains unchanged. Should there be more than twenty-four Sun-

are remedial and not primarily vindictive. Vengeance is reserved for the after-world. It is there that Jehovah will repay. The burden of the Old Testament seems, at times, to contradict that view; but we must recall the various historical circumstances in which its teaching was delivered. Israel had a political destiny to live for, as well as a spiritual one; its racial integrity was one of the conditions upon which the realization of the higher promises hung. To secure that portion of His covenant the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob is represented as visiting the sins of the fathers upon their children to the third and fourth generation. Even on earth, in a man's life-time, Jehovah would interfere to keep His worship, and all that it stood for, pure. But on the deeper question of the soul's personal responsibility for its own transgressions, considered apart from its fellowship with the chosen tribes, the pages of the Old Testament are not really at variance with those of the New. They are less clear and explicit; that is all. Both announce one saving message: *God's thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment. It is not the death of the sinner He wills, but rather that he be converted and live.* Life is a time of trial and probation; and while it lasts there seems to be no limit to the divine tenderness. God will not afflict forever; He will think thoughts of peace; He will heal.

days after Pentecost, however, the *Prayers*, *Epistles*, and *Gospels* of the Masses for the intercalary period will be taken from the unused portion of the pre-Septuagesima series of the year.

My thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment: That promise of the Eternal One runs from end to end sweetly out of the Ancient Dispensation into the New. It is the dream of Israel, the desire of his Patriarchs, the hope of his Kings, the unchanging theme of the Prophets who tried to keep him true. Peace, not as we conceive it, a time of rest after the turmoil of war, but rather as something higher, completer, holier and far more life-giving, a condition of inner soundness and health, first for the race and then for every offshoot from it that remained joined in blood and ideals to the parent stock—that is the meaning of the word that came home with so much sweetness and with such a wealth of divine connotation to the Hebrew heart—*shalom*, well-being, prosperity, a kind of wholesome and many-sided fulness of life. How intimately that notion became part of the Jew, the most casual glance at his history will reveal. No wonder that the hope of its realization colored his daily speech. He could not get it out of his thoughts. *Is it well with thee? Is peace within?* he asked when greeting a kinsman or an acquaintance. *Peace be unto thee, peace go with thee*, he prayed when taking leave. Had he not heard the divine promise delivered in that form when Moses sent his elect people on their way through history to realize themselves in Christ, Who was to be pre-eminently the Prince of Peace? *Ye shall keep My Sabbaths and reverence My Sanctuary; I am the Lord. If ye walk in My statutes and keep My Commandments, and do them, then will I give you rain in due season, and the land shall*

yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time, and ye shall eat your bread to the full and dwell in your land safely. And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down and none shall make you afraid. . . . And ye shall eat old store and clear away the old because of the new; and I will set My Tabernacle among you; and My soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you and will be your God, and ye shall be My people.

The full realization of that promise was found ultimately in Our Lord; and if in Our Lord, it is surely doing no violence to the Scriptures to find it also in the Mass. He is there and He gives us His peace *early in the morning, if we only seek Him.* It is the Sacrifice of Our Peace. In the measure in which we share in its fulness—its inexhaustible *pleroma,*—in that measure is it *well with us.* We become whole-hearted and sound. We are alive in Him Who came to give life more abundantly. *Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, give us this Peace.*

From every quarter will I lead your captives home again: The children of the dispersion must return. *There shall be One Fold and One Shepherd.* Not only sinners who know His ordinances, and knowing them will not obey, but those who dwell in the outer twilight, who see Him but imperfectly, who misconceive of the sacra-

mental system of His Church, who are as blind men with half-restored vision, discerning His Apostles and ministers through a disturbing medium of inherited prejudice, accounting them as strange portents, *trees walking* —these, too, shall be brought home again. *He shall lead captivity captive;* He shall win them back through the compelling mystery of His Mass. Pray for such conversions. Our Blessed Lord loves that kind of prayer. Hear Mass often for such an end; have it said when you can, for these intentions. It is the Sacrifice of the living as well as of the dead.

I will lead your captives home again: We believe in the power of the Mass, so far as God is pleased to accept it in that sense, as capable of releasing all *imprisoned souls* who have, by His great mercy, won their right to be admitted ultimately to His presence after death. These are they *who are detained for a while.* The sense of their own need for further purification, and the forbidding purity of His holy countenance hold them in check. They dare not behold the unveiled glory; they could not, if they would. In that detention lies their most pathetic suffering. Pray for all such captives, wherever they may be. Let the Sacrifice of our Ransom be the Sacrifice of their Ransom also. Let the Propitiation which is laid upon the Altar so plentifully fill up what is lacking to them of the victorious sufferings of Christ. God wills us to be devout to the spirits of the just in Purgatory. That land of detention is His own land surely, in spite of

the grief that prevails there. He blesses it daily in the Transubstantiation of the elements. If we call upon Him in its behalf, *He will hearken and from every quarter will He lead its captives back* to that City of Peace, *the Jerusalem which is from above*, where every Catholic has his abiding home.

The Twenty-Fourth and Last Sunday after Pentecost

INTROIT: Jer. xxix, 11 and ss., and Ps. lxxxiv, 2-3.
EPISTLE: Col. i, 9-14.
GOSPEL: S. Matt. xxiv, 15-35.

Introitus: Dicit Dominus: Ego cogito cogitationes pacis et non afflictionis; invocabitis me et ego exaudiam vos: et reducam captivitatem vestram de cunctis locis.

Benedixisti, Domine, terram tuam: avertisti captivitatem Jacob.

The Entrance Versicle: *Thus saith the Lord: My thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment: Ye shall call upon Me and I will hearken unto you: And from every quarter will I lead your captives home again.*

Thou hast blessed Thine own land, O Lord: Thou hast ended the captivity of Jacob.

MY thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment: There is a curious contrast between the note of the Entrance Versicle to-day and that of the Gospel. In the one we have the old burden of peace, the

never-failing message of God's abundant healing; while in the other we hear Our Blessed Lord's denunciation of judgment and the wrath to come. Is the contrast intended? In so far as we may detect the mind of Christ behind the Church's liturgy, we think it wise to maintain that it is; but the discordant extremes are harmonized in the Epistle from St. Paul, which intervenes like a reassuring bridge of melody between the two. We shall not fear in the time of tribulation, because we shall have been strengthened against that day *with all might*, having renewed our hearts daily in the Mass. *Giving thanks*—εὐχαριστοῦντες—*unto God the Father, Who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light . . . and translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of His love, in Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the remission of sins.* The peace that has been established between God and our own souls through a worthy use of the great Sacrifice of our ransom will keep us from servile fear when the heavens shall be moved.

My thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment: That is true of all the sacramental ordinances of the New Dispensation. Baptism, Confirmation, the Holy Eucharist, Penance, the Last Anointing, Holy Orders and Matrimony—they are all so many signs to us, revealing the true mind of God. Each one stands for a separate thought in our regard entertained by Him from of old. That is a very clumsy, because human and im-

perfect, way of putting it; but it is, none the less, a true way. In our present estate we can understand no other. The Sacraments of His Church are the words of His peace. Each separate institution secures to us the divine gift of well-being, of whole-heartedness, infallibly, but diversely. In the Mass we have the thing Itself, Christ our true Peace and Eternal Propitiation, offered by way of suffrage, if we stand apart from Him in sin, and applied to us substantially in bodily wise as food, if we approach His table and become *partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*

My thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment: Good people often wonder at the spectacle of well-established wickedness in high places in this world. They ask themselves: Does God, then, sleep? No; God does not sleep. He hates the evil; but He has wisely appointed a time for all things. This is the season for planting and not for plucking up. He will suffer the tares to grow with the wheat; because His thoughts are always for peace and not for punishment. The Mass is the great evidence for that. He would gladly do for all this earth, if He could, what His loving-kindness did long ago for Jerusalem. He would fence it round from wrong. *He would strengthen the bars of its gates, and bless its children within it; He would fill it with the fat of wheat.* Has He not established His Church to have dominion over it in His name? *He has made her borders peace; and with the fat of wheat* has He filled her for

the earth's sake. *His thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment.*

My thoughts are thoughts of peace and not of punishment: To fable a golden age has always been the privilege of poets and dreamers; yet the golden age is itself no dream for them that believe. It is with us here and now; and peace is the pledge of its reality. Do we not *sacrifice sacrifices of justice* when we take part in the Mass? There are many that puzzle their wits over the problem of evil; but here is the Problem of Good! *Many say: Who will show us good? Lift up over us the light of Thy countenance, O Jehovah. Thou hast put gladness into my heart. With the fruit of their corn and wine they have been enriched. In peace will I lay me down and sleep!* In peace! To think of the Mass is the supreme comfort of all whose hearts are troubled over the world's lawlessness. God turns His face towards us for the sake of the Good Thing each priest can show when the Host is lifted up. No doubt Our Lord's day of reckoning is ever before Him. With God it is always Now; but meanwhile for us who are agitated and fear not—the Hebrew text means that, if it means anything —it is a time of plenty, and we shall do well to fill our houses with the *Fat of His Elect Wheat.*

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AUTHOR CLIFFORD, CORNELIUS

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